





## Turk troops end Iraq offensive on rebel Kurds

ANKARA (R) — Turkish troops have ended a two-week cross-border military offensive into northern Iraq in pursuit of rebel Kurds, state-run Anatolian News Agency said on Tuesday.

"The operation has finished successfully," the agency reported.

It said a total of 182 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas had been killed since Dec. 5 when around 10,000 Turkish soldiers backed by warplanes and artillery crossed into Iraq to strike against the rebels.

Anatolian said there were no casualties among the Turkish armed forces, but seven members of an Iraqi Kurdish militia allied to Turkey against the PKK were wounded in the operation.

No independent confirmation of the reports was available from the area, which was closed to journalists by Turkish authorities.

The push was concentrated against guerrilla positions around Khwakur near Iraq's border with

Turkey and Iran.

Turkey has mounted a number of similar incursions into Iraqi Kurdish-controlled territory this year in an effort to dislodge Turkish Kurd PKK units operating in the mountainous area and maintain around 8,000 troops permanently in the region.

The latest offensive was condemned by Muslim nations attending last week's Islamic summit in Tehran.

But Turkey's generals said they would press ahead with

the fight against the PKK and launch more cross-border attacks into Iraq if necessary.

"Turkish armed forces will continue their struggle against the separatist terror organisation with the same resolve and determination whether inside Turkey or, if necessary, inside northern Iraq," Anatolian quoted a statement from the Turkish general staff as saying.

Large amounts of ammunition, foodstuffs and supplies were captured during the offensive, dealing a

heavy blow to the rebels as harsh winter conditions set in, the statement said.

Turkey says a power vacuum in the remote region, outside Baghdad's control since the 1991 Gulf war, has allowed the PKK to establish bases from which to launch raids on southeast Turkey.

More than 27,000 people have been killed in the 13-year conflict between the Turkish security forces and the PKK, who are fighting for self-rule in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast.

## Netanyahu to hand Albright allegations of Palestinian anti-Semitism

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will hand U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on Thursday a report accusing the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of engaging in anti-Semitic propaganda, officials said Wednesday.

The 13-page report, titled "A Compendium of Hate," was distributed by Mr. Netanyahu's media advisor, David Bar-Ilan, and includes 50 anti-Semitic statements attributed to Palestinian officials or media financed by the PNA.

Among the statements was a sermon by the PNA-appointed mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Akrama Sabri, in which he called Jewish settlers "descendants of monkeys and pigs." The sermon, made during Friday prayers, was broadcast on the official Voice of Palestine radio in July.

The Israeli report accused Palestinian officials of referring often to the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a classic anti-Semitic text written by the Tsarist secret police in Russia in the 19th century to support charges that Jews were plotting to dominate the world.

It also said Palestinian officials frequently compare Israeli leaders with Nazis, equate Zionism with racism, deny the Holocaust and use anti-Semitic stereotypes depicting Jews as "power-hungry and lusting after money."

The report claims that such remarks violate the terms of the 1993 Oslo peace accord granting Palestinians limited autonomy. Under the agreement, the Palestinians are required to prevent "incitement" against Israel.

## PNA has sought to cover up deaths in prison, human rights group says

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A human rights organisation accused the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of allowing deaths by torture in its prisons to go unquestioned and unpunished in a report released Wednesday.

"Out of 16 cases of prisoners dying in Palestinian jails since 1994, not one report of investigation into the death has been published despite promises," said Bassam Eid, head of the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group (PHRMG).

"Officials go unpunished for the deaths," Mr. Eid said, condemning Palestinian officials for "covering up the deaths and mistreating the families of those the security services have killed."

The PHRMG report detailed the 16 cases in which prisoners died in prison, most confirmed or suspected to be the result of torture by inter-

rogators. In 10 of the cases investigations were promised but never published.

"The question remains open whether investigations were made but kept secret or if they were never made at all," the report said.

In five cases, Palestinian officials claimed the victims committed suicide "despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary," and in two of those cases the claim of suicide "was so feeble it had to be dropped."

In one such case, the body of Fayez Qumsiyeh, who died in January 1997 in Bethlehem, was returned his family with "his pants wrapped around his neck, a broken arm and bruises on his body."

Authorities said at first Qumsiyeh, 53, had committed suicide, then later said he had had a heart attack.

Officials were arrested for six of the deaths and tried in four of them, including the

case of Nasser Radwan, who died while in custody of President Arafat's presidential guard, Force 17, in June 1997.

Five members of Force 17 were convicted for killing Radwan after he was arrested for "telling the wife of a Force 17 officer that she should dress more modestly in public."

The report said families of the victims were treated in a "haphazard" way which often showed attempts to "cover up the circumstances of the death."

Hashim Abu Jarbua, the father of Farid, the first prisoner to die in custody in 1994, was ordered after his son's death to report with his daughter to then attorney general Khaled Al Qidra, Mr. Hashim told the PHRMG.

Mr. Qidra threatened to detain his daughter and only relented after Mr. Hashim threatened to commit suicide by jumping out of his office win-

dow then promised not to seek an investigation into his son's death, Mr. Hashim said.

In the case of Sami Abed Rabbo, who died in Gaza in June 1997, authorities only released his body to the family after winning a promise they would not seek an autopsy or pursue any claims against the PNA, the report said.

In other cases, family members were offered money, up to \$30,000 in the case of Nasser Radwan, pieces of land or jobs in the PNA as compensation for the deaths, the report said.

Two other cases of death, not mentioned in the report but bringing the total to 18, occurred in Nablus prison, where two prisoners died in October and November from illness, perhaps exacerbated by "police negligence" although no mistreatment was reported, the PHRMG said in a separate statement.



IN PROTEST: An Iraqi man comforts his handicapped children on the pavement during a demonstration in front of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad on Wednesday. The Iraqi Child Support Society held a protest rally to demand that the United Nations save Iraq's children and lift the crippling sanctions on the country (Reuters photo)

## Arab-Israeli Knesset member holds talks with Syrian foreign minister

DAMASCUS (AFP) — An Arab-Israeli MP, Azmi Bishara, met here Wednesday with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa, the official Syrian news agency SANA reported.

The meeting focused on "the Palestinian situation and the future of the peace process," SANA said.

The Arab-Israeli MP met Monday with Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam on "obstacles in the peace process due to the policy of the Israeli government," according to the news agency.

Mr. Bishara, a member of a communist opposition party, also met Monday and Tuesday with the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of

Palestine (PFLP), George Habash, and the head of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Nayef Hawatmeh.

Mr. Bishara was due to leave Damascus later Wednesday for Beirut to take part in a seminar — "The Arabs and Globalisation" due to be held Dec. 18-20.

There has been no word, however, on whether Lebanese authorities will allow him to make what would be an unprecedented visit to Beirut by an Israeli MP.

The seminar, in which about 60 Arab intellectuals will take part, is organized by the Beirut-based Institute of Arab Unity Studies headed by

Khairiddine Hassib, a former Iraqi government minister and U.N. official.

Mr. Bishara has said he will take part in the seminar "not as a deputy in the Israeli parliament, but as an intellectual and philosopher."

Lebanon and Israel have been officially in a state of war since the creation of Israel in 1948. Lebanon bars entry to Israeli citizens or other nationals with Israeli visas on their passports.

In Syria, a delegation of 50 Arab-Israelis, including six MPs, visited in August for the first visit of its kind since the creation of Israel in 1948. The delegation met with Syrian President Hafez Assad.

## Farrakhan urges world to embrace Islam

CAIRO (AFP) — U.S. black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan on Wednesday urged the world to embrace Islam during talks in the Egyptian capital with the spiritual leader of Sunni Muslims.

"The only way for a human being to have peace is to truly accept Islam," Mr. Farrakhan said as he met with Sheikh Mohammad Tantawi of Al Azhar, the supreme religious authority in Sunni Islam.

The leader of the Chicago-based Nation of Islam was accompanied to the meeting by his son Mustafa, senior aide Akbar Muhammad, his "minister of religious affairs," Ahmad Tijani, and his "minister of health," Abdul Ali Muhammad.

"I am honoured to be in the oldest and greatest institution of learning in the

world," Mr. Farrakhan said of Al Azhar, the great mosque-university founded by the Fatimid rulers in 970 A.D.

Sheikh Tantawi told Mr. Farrakhan that "Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood."

"It is important to remember in Islam that all races come from one man and one woman. Islam does not differentiate between blacks and whites," Sheikh Tantawi said.

The 64-year-old Mr. Farrakhan arrived in Cairo Wednesday for a three-day visit, part of a three-month tour of 54 countries he has described as a "mission of peace and reconciliation."

"I am honoured to be in the jewel of the Arab World, Cairo, Egypt," he told reporters at the airport.

"Egypt is critical nation in the peace process," Mr. Far-

rakhan said, and "a critical nation in the unification of the Arab and Muslim World."

He said his next stop will be Libya and that he planned to go there by road because of a U.N. air embargo imposed over Tripoli's refusal to hand over two Libyans suspected of carrying out the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland.

The black Muslim leader made a surprise stop Sunday in the West Bank and travelled through Israel to Gaza City where he met Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

His visit was criticised by the Israeli authorities, angered by Mr. Farrakhan's anti-Semitic statements and his open friendship with Arab enemies of Israel, and the black Muslim leader cancelled a planned visit to

the Al Aqsa Mosque compound in Arab east Jerusalem.

The State Department has denounced Mr. Farrakhan's plan to visit Libya and a trip he made last week to Iraq, arguing that the visits would be used for anti-American propaganda purposes.

"We made clear that a visit by Minister Farrakhan to Libya and Iraq would not be helpful, and we are therefore opposed to him going," State Department spokesman James Rubin said.

During his meeting with Sheikh Tantawi, the Nation of Islam leader said the United States was "dying from internal rot due to moral decadence."

He also spoke of the "suffering" among the Palestinians and the Iraqi people "who are dying because of the sanctions."

### JORDAN TELEVISION Tel. 77311-19 PROGRAMME TWO

**Thursday Programmes**  
14:10 "The World of Peter Rabin"  
14:30 "My Little Fairy Tale"  
15:00 America's Funniest People  
15:30 "He Shoots, He Scores"  
16:00 "National Geographic"  
16:30 "The Prince and the Pauper"  
17:00 "French Programmes"  
19:00 "News in French"  
19:15 "French Programmes"  
19:30 "News Headlines"  
19:35 "Trivial Pursuit"  
20:00 "The Parenthood"  
20:30 "Lois and Clark"  
21:10 "Oprah Winfrey Show"  
22:00 "News in English"  
22:30 Feature Film: "Marriage Bed"  
23:59 "Music Show"

**Friday Programmes**  
14:10 "The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin"  
14:30 "The New Fred and Barney Show"  
15:00 "Wishbone"  
15:30 "Lucky Luke"  
16:00 "Family Matters"  
16:20 Doc. — "Natural Wonders of Europe"  
17:00 "French Programmes"  
19:30 "News Headlines"  
19:35 Doc. — "Life on the Internet"  
20:00 Comedy — "Are You Being Served?"  
20:30 "Brisco County"  
21:10 "Doc. — Horizon"  
22:00 "News in English"  
22:30 "Mini-series"  
23:15 Feature Film: "Thousand Heroes"

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

### PRAYER TIMES

05:02 .....Fajr  
06:25 .....Sunrise/Duha  
11:32 .....Dhuhr  
14:16 .....Asr  
16:39 .....Maghreb  
18:02 .....Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Swatfiah, Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel.  
632785.  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590  
Church of the Annunciation Tel.  
637440.  
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.  
Terra Sancta Church Tel.  
622366  
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.  
771331.  
Armenian Orthodox Church  
Tel. 775261.  
St. Ephraim Church Tel.  
771751.  
Amman International Church  
Tel. 865897  
Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Tel. 824328.  
German-speaking Evangelical  
Congregation Tel. 688404  
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.  
654932.  
Church of Nazarene Tel.  
675691.  
The Evangelical Local Church  
in Amman Tel. 811295  
English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel.  
614190.

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.  
Cold weather conditions will prevail with skies cloudy to partly cloudy. Occasional scattered showers are expected and winds westerly to north-westerly moderate. On Friday, a cold air mass will affect the Kingdom. It will be cold, cloudy, and rainy with snow expected to fall over areas that are 1,200 metres above sea level. In Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy and winds northerly active. There will be a chance of occasional scattered showers and seas calm.

Amman .....06/10  
Aqaba .....10/18  
Deserts .....04/12  
Jordan Valley .....10/19

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 12, Aqaba 20  
Humidity readings: Amman  
85 per cent, Aqaba 55 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Aff Shukri .....898863

Dr. Nidal Al Dahleh .....827195  
Dr. Yusef Nasr .....751144  
Dr. Sa'ad Tawfiq .....788285  
Abdall Pharmacy .....661912  
Ferdous pharmacy .....778336  
Al Asena pharmacy .....637055  
Nairokh pharmacy .....623672  
Al Salam pharmacy .....636730  
Yaacoub pharmacy .....644945  
Shmeisani pharmacy .....637660  
Najib pharmacy .....847632  
IRBID:  
Dr. Mazin Abu Bakir .....276802  
Al Quds pharmacy .....(—)  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Rafiq Atallah .....994424  
Khalifeh pharmacy .....985417

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre .....637111  
Civil Defence Department .....661111  
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue .....630341  
Civil Defence Emergency .....199  
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade .....617101  
Blood Bank .....775121  
Highway Police .....843402  
Traffic Police .....896390  
Public Security Department .....620321  
Hotel Complaints .....605800  
Price Complaints .....661176  
Water and Sewerage Complaints .....897467  
Amman Municipality Complaints .....787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) .....121

Overseas Calls .....010230  
Central Amman Telephone Repairs .....623101  
Abdall Telephone Repairs .....661101  
Jordan Television .....773111  
Radio Jordan .....774111  
Water Authority .....680100  
Jordan Electricity Authority .....815615  
Electric Power Company .....636381  
RJ Flight Information (8-53200)  
Queen Alia Intl. Airport (8-53200)

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:  
Hussain Medical Centre .....813813/32  
Khalidi Maternity .....644281/6  
Akileh Maternity .....642441/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity .....642362  
Malinas, J. Amman .....636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071  
Stourssani Hospital .....869131  
University Hospital .....845845  
Al-Musaber Hospital .....667227/9  
The Islamic, Abdall 666126/37  
Al-Ahli, Abdall .....664164/6  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen .....777101/3  
Al-Bashir, .....775111/26  
Army, Marka .....891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital .....602240/50  
Amal Hospital .....674155  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery .....865199

ZARQA:  
Govt. Hospital .....09 683323  
Zarqa National Hospital .....09 900560  
Ibn Sina Hospital (09 986732)  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital .....09 990990  
IRBID:  
Princess Basma Hospital .....02 275555  
Greek Catholic Hospital .....02 272275  
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital .....02 247100  
AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital .....03 314111

### FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08) 53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08 (53250).

### ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
07:15 .....Sanaa (RJ)  
08:25 .....Bamfay (RJ)  
09:15 .....Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)

09:30 .....New Delhi (RJ)  
10:05 .....Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
10:05 .....Beirut (RJ)  
10:15 .....Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
11:20 .....Colombo (RJ)  
15:00 .....New York, Amsterdam (RJ)  
16:25 .....London (RJ)  
17:20 .....Moscow (RJ)  
17:20 .....Athens (RJ)  
18:05 .....Kuwait (RJ)  
18:55 .....Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)  
19:05 .....Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)  
22:50 .....Larnaca (RJ)  
23:15 .....Jeddah (add) (RJ)

### Other Flights

13:15 .....Riyadh (SV)  
14:10 .....Sharjah (AH)  
15:00 .....Doha (QR)  
15:20 .....Muscat, Doha (GF)  
16:00 .....Doha (EK)  
16:30 .....Rome (AZ)  
20:00 .....Tel Aviv (MS)  
20:40 .....Cairo (MS)  
23:10 .....Istanbul (TK)  
23:30 .....London, Beirut (BA)  
23:35 .....Larnaca (CY)

### DEPARTURES

00:35 .....Amsterdam (KL)  
03:00 .....Athens (OA)  
06:40 .....Beirut, London (BA)  
08:00 .....Beirut (ME)  
11:20 .....London (BA)  
14:45 .....Riyadh (SV)  
15:00 .....Algiers (AH)  
15:55 .....Doha (QR)  
16:20 .....Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)  
17:00 .....Muscat, Dubai (EK)  
17:30 .....Rome (AZ)  
21:20 .....Tel Aviv (LY)  
21:40 .....Cairo (MS)

Royal Wings (RW)  
(For Thursday and Friday)  
07:45 .....Aqaba (RW)  
09:05 .....Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
09:50 .....Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
17:20 .....Tel Aviv (RW)  
18:30 .....Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
21:20 .....Aqaba (RW)  
22:50 .....Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

Royal Wings  
(For Thursday and Friday)  
06:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
08:15 .....Aqaba (RW)  
09:30 .....Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
16:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
17:55 .....Tel Aviv (RW)  
20:30 .....Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
21:50 .....Aqaba (RW)



## Prince Firas opens symposium on organ donation, transplantation

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for HRH Princess Rania, president of the Jordanian Society for Encouraging Organ Donation, His Majesty King Hussein's Health Advisor Prince Firas Wednesday opened a symposium at Specialty Hospital on organ donation and transplantation in Jordan.

The government spends JD6.5 million to cover the costs of dialysis treatment and medicine for some of the Kingdom's 650,700 kidney patients, he added.

The Prince called for establishing a national centre for organ transplantation in Jordan, including a national register for all patients needing organs.

Many citizens wish to donate the organs of recently deceased relatives but cannot do so due to the lack of qual-

ified medical personnel and a mechanism for organising and distributing organ donations, he said.

Khalid Mualwas, the hospital's director general, said the symposium seeks to reach a scientific, religious, and medical consensus to encourage people to donate organs.

Organs transplantation can save the treasury large amounts of money spent on medical treatment, he said, noting that the cost of treating

one kidney patient using dialysis is around JD11,000 per year.

Dr. Mualwas said the kidney transplantation rate abroad is 90 per cent, compared to one per cent in Jordan. He attributed this very low rate to lack of awareness and failure on the part of some health providers to promote this idea.

However, the success rate of kidney transplantation in Jordan is 95 per cent, he stated.

## Tourism will be supported despite drop in number of tourists — Biltaji

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has witnessed a decline this year in the number of tourists visiting its archaeological and tourist attractions compared to last year, but this will not discourage the country from exerting efforts to improve tourist facilities, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Biltaji said Wednesday.

The minister, in a lecture at Al al Bayt University in Mafraq, attributed the decline to the current situation in the Middle East, for which he blamed the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Stating that the number

of tourists this year dropped by 5.5 per cent from last year, the minister said an increase in the average length of stay by tourists in the country compensated for this.

Jordan has earned \$800 million from the tourism industry so far this year, he added.

Tourism, which counts as part of Jordan's exports, was the second largest earner of foreign currency last year after phosphate, accounting for 37 per cent of the country's overall exports and 11 per cent of its gross domestic product, he stated.

Despite the decline in

the number of tourists this year, Jordan will continue modernising tourist services by building hotels, improving tourist transport facilities, and developing resthouses at archaeological sites in cooperation with the private sector, according to the minister.

At least four major five-star, world-class hotels are currently under construction in Amman at a total cost of around JD100 million and others are being built at the Dead Sea and the port of Aqaba, according to tourism industry sources.

The Ministry of Tourism is encouraging investment

in the tourism industry and is offering investors from Jordan and other countries attractive incentives and tax exemptions, he said. At the same time, it is promoting training programmes for tourist guides and workers in hotels and other tourist facilities, he added.

Ministry of Tourism sources said a decline in European visitors to Jordan this year was offset by an influx of visitors from the Gulf states as political ties warmed up and by growing religious tourism from Indonesia and Malaysia.

## 1998 UNICEF report targets child malnutrition

AMMAN (J.T.) — Malnutrition contributes to the death of nearly seven million children worldwide per year and leaves millions other physically maimed, intellectually impaired, and suffering from the consequences of a weakened immune system, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) 1998 State of the World's Children Report.

In the Middle East and North Africa region, 17-43 per cent of the deaths of children under the age of five were associated with malnutrition.

The report, which was launched globally Tuesday, said malnutrition can take a variety of related forms, such as protein-energy malnutrition and deficiencies of micronutrients including iron, iodine, and vitamin A.

A press release issued by the UNICEF office in Amman stated that 38 per cent of Jordanian children are iodine deficient, according to the findings of a national survey on iodine

deficiency disorders, which was until recently the world's leading cause of preventable mental retardation.

Before 1990, approximately 40 million children worldwide were born each year at some risk of mental impairment due to iodine deficiency in their mothers' diets, according to the report.

In 1997, this figure dropped to 28 million thanks to the salt iodization programmes that have been implemented in a large number of countries, the report said.

A remarkable improvement in Jordan has been realised since the introduction of iodised salt, which is now consumed by 75 per cent of the families in Jordan, the study said.

Vitamin A deficiency is not considered a public health problem, despite the lack of national data, it stated.

The release said 94 per cent of mothers in Jordan breast-feed their children,

including 27 per cent who initiate it within the first half-hour after delivery and 53 per cent who breast-feed exclusively for the first four months.

Warning of the grave consequences of malnutrition, UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy said: "The persistence of malnutrition has profound and frightening implications for children, society, and the future of humankind."

Ms. Bellamy said malnutrition is not a simple matter of whether a child can satisfy his or her appetite.

"A child who eats enough to avoid immediate hunger can still be malnourished. Good nutrition relies on a combination of adequate nutritious food, good health services, and proper care for pregnant women and children," she said.

The report urged governments to show commitment and provide funding to support community-based actions to combat malnutrition.

## 1996 fraud cases cost Jordan JD819,483 — report

AMMAN (J.T.) — Auditors from the Audit Bureau last year discovered 49 public fund embezzlement and fraud cases in government departments amounting to JD819,483, of which only JD71,879 has been recovered, according to a report recently published by the bureau.

The report, as published in the local press, noted that the cases of fraud were discovered at the ministries of supply, finance, and health. These violations will be debated by the new Parliament during the present session, the report added.

The Audit Bureau attributed the fraud cases to the following:

- multiple tasks entrusted to the collectors of public funds;
- employment of unqualified officials, lack of job descriptions for each, and poor performance on the part of inventory staff;
- poor internal control;
- lack of appropriate measures to deter violators;
- failure to prevent manipulation of food coupons and failure to refer violators to court; and
- improper accountability measures at some of Jordan's embassies abroad.

The report also stated that the bureau sent government departments a total of 706 notes requesting clarifications of funds spent during 1996, but received only 65 replies.

It also noted that through its investigations and control procedures, the bureau was able to save JD10,601,870 for the state treasury in 1996.

## Arab development fund endorses \$113m loan for dam construction

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) has endorsed a \$113 million loan to Jordan to help it finance development projects.

The loan, to be paid back over a period of 16 years with a six-year grace period, will be used to finance the construction of dams in the Jordan Valley at Waleh, Tannour, and Mujib, as well

as a water pipeline to draw water from Mujib to the eastern shore of the Dead Sea.

According to Ministry of Water and Irrigation sources, a delegation from AFESD previously visited Jordan to assess the dams' feasibility studies and prepare a report recommending the implementation of the project to the fund's board. The two sides had initialled a tentative

agreement during the delegation's visit to the country, according to the sources.

The ministry said the dam at Mujib is designed to collect rain water to be used for industrial and agricultural purposes in the southern Jordan Valley region.

The Mujib dam, which is expected to cost around \$79 million, will be 51.5 metres high and will store up to 35 mil-

lion cubic metres of water, while the dam at Waleh will be 45 metres high and can store up to 9.3 million cubic metres of rain water. The dam at Tannour will be 65 metres high and will store up to 8.9 million cubic metres of water.

The designs and the tender documents for the three projected dams have already been finalised, according to the ministry.

## Palestinian support for peace process has increased since July — survey

AMMAN (J.T.) — An opinion poll conducted by the Jerusalem Media Centre in the West Bank and published in Al Quds Arabic daily in Jerusalem revealed that Palestinian support for the peace process has increased from 68.7 per cent last July to 74.2 per cent at present.

The survey showed that support for the Fatah movement, the largest Palestinian faction, rose from 34.8 per cent to 40.9 per cent and support for Palestinian National Authority (PNA) President Yasser Arafat increased from 37.6 per cent to 46.4 per cent in the same period.

According to the survey, these changes in opinion occurred as a result of the political developments in Palestine over the past

three months, especially Israel's refusal to implement terms of the peace accords concluded with the PNA, including the redeployment of Israeli forces.

The changes were due to the Palestinian people's belief that Israel is trying to renege on the agreements, according to the poll.

It noted that Mr. Arafat's firm stand with regard to unacceptable Israeli proposals and the tension between the PNA and Israel have increased the Palestinian people's confidence in their leadership. The survey added that the wide-ranging campaign in the Israeli media alleging that Mr. Arafat's health condition is deteriorating may have contributed to increasing Palestinian sympathy for

their leader.

At the same time, the poll showed that support for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, increased from 11.3 per cent in July to 17.3 per cent last month and that there was an increase of public confidence in opposition groups including Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and other Islamic organisations, in addition to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The increase from 20.1 per cent in July to 25 per cent last month reflected public sympathy for Hamas following the Israeli attempt on the life of Khaled Misha'al, a Hamas leader in Amman, and the release of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin from an Israeli jail, according to the poll.

On the economic front,

only 19.2 per cent of the sample in the poll believed that the peace process has contributed positively to the national economy, while 38.3 per cent believed that the peace process has affected the economy negatively.

It is worth noting that reports by the U.N. and the World Bank support the view on the negative trend in the economy, as both state that the standard of living and income of the Palestinian people has dropped over the past four years.

As for corruption, 40.8 per cent of those responding to the questionnaire believed that the PNA was dealing with this issue, while 47.8 per cent said the PNA is not doing enough to address the situation.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Snow forecast for Friday

AMMAN (Petra) — Meteorology Department sources Wednesday said the weather today will be cold and partly cloudy, with intermittent showers.

The sources added that snow is expected Friday in areas above 1,200 metres, due to a cold polar air mass that will affect the Kingdom this weekend. Ice is also expected Saturday night.

#### Meeting to open in Cairo to discuss Palestinian issues

AMMAN (Petra) — Representatives of Arab countries hosting Palestinian refugees will meet in Cairo next Sunday to discuss issues related to Israeli measures in the occupied territories, Israeli plans to Judaize Jerusalem, economic and social conditions in the Palestinian territories, Israeli settlements and Jewish immigration, and the services of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).

The Jordanian delegation to the one-week meeting will be led by Palestinian Affairs Department Director General Ibrahim Tarshihi.



**FASHION SHOW:** A young model displays the season's style at a children's fashion show opened Wednesday by HRH Princess Sumaya at the Spanish Cultural Centre. Proceeds from the two-day show, which was organised by the Jordanian Child Fund in cooperation with Instituto Cervantes, will benefit poor children (Petra photo).

## Qatar pledges to boost investment in Kingdom, resume financial aid

(Continued from page 1)

developments, including Iraq, the stalled Arab-Israeli peace process and perceived Iranian overtures to improve strained ties with the Arab world.

Crown Prince Hassan hailed close links with Doha saying that the "Qatari desire to interact with us [Jordan] on the middle management level, not just on the official level" was evident. "This is not just a question of building from the top down... but is also at all levels," he explained.

"We see eye to eye on many issues, and not just on the political level," the Crown Prince told the press.

His Royal Highness and Sheikh Hamad also stressed the need to co-ordinate stands ahead of a meeting of OIC foreign ministers in Doha in March.

Jordan and Qatar are keen on re-activating many of the OIC institutions and following up on resolutions taken up by the Tehran summit, especially setting up a conflict resolution centre for the Muslim World and establishing "codes of conduct," such as non-interference in internal affairs of countries, and non-funding of terrorism.

Both leaders focused on the outcome of the OIC summit and perceived changes in Iran's "rhetoric towards the

Arab-Israeli peace process," one Jordanian official said.

Arab states have long viewed Tehran with suspicion after the 1979 Islamist revolution, and the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war. Many have accused it of obstructing the six-year old Arab-Israeli peace process, funding "terrorism" and trying to export "its Shiite revolution" to other states in the region-charges vehemently denied by Iran.

Based on the new perceived changes in Tehran, Qatar and Jordan are keen to "re-integrate Iran into the region," one senior official told the Jordan Times.

On the economic level, Jordan and Qatar also initiated an agreement to prevent dual taxation and agreed to set up a liaison office in Doha to co-ordinate investment and business opportunities in Jordan, especially in areas of tourism, industries, transportation and banking.

A Qatari business delegation is expected to visit Amman next week to view investment opportunities in Jordan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State Affairs Jawad Anani said.

Several Qatari investors have visited Amman recently and expressed interest in investing unilaterally or in joint ventures with Jordanian partners.

A Jordanian-Qatari joint



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali talk to Qatari emir Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani and Qatari Crown Prince, Sheikh Jasssem Ben Hamad Al Thani, Wednesday, before their return back home (photo by Boghos).

venture was set up last month to build four factories, two in each country, to manufacture food stuffs, clothes and petrochemicals at a total cost of \$25 million.

The deal was signed during the controversial Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference, held in Doha last month.

Northern Jordan attended the conference, boycotted by most Arab countries, including the Palestinians, Egypt and Saudi Arabia as a protest to Israel's hard-line policies —

a move which Qatar appreciated, Israel, which has a commercial office in Doha, attended the MENA conference.

Jordan's association agreement with the European Union, signed late last month, could provide Qatar with a gateway to further boost exports to Europe, according to Minister of Foreign Affairs Fayez Tarawneh.

The Jordan-EU deal envisages creating a free trade area by the year 2010 — considered to be a major challenge

for the country's infant industries that have long relied on protectionist policies.

Some economists believe many Arab businessmen might be lured to setting up industries in Jordan, which has liberalised investment rules, to gain access to the lucrative EU markets.

His Majesty King Hussein met Crown Prince Hassan and the accompanying delegation, which included Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Dr. Tarawneh and Dr. Anani, on their return.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### FILMS

\* "El Maestro de Esgrima" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

\* "The Philosophies and Aesthetics of Impressionism" at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

\* "Home Alone" (pt. I) at the American Center, Abdoun on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

### CONCERT

\* Musical performance by the International Family Troupe at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m. (Another performance will be held on Saturday).

### EXHIBITIONS

\* Works by Ghada Dahdaleh at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Dec. 20.

\* Photo exhibition by Edgardo Rodriguez entitled "Arab Presence in Cuban Architecture" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Dec. 20.

\* Plastic (abstract) art by Iraqi artist Dhia Khaza'i at Hammurabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5536098), until Dec. 18.

\* Exhibition of prints by Algerian artist Rashid Koraishi and calligraphy by Iraqi artist Hassan Massoudi, inspired by the poems of Mahmoud Darwish, at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Dec. 31. Also displaying paintings by Jordanian artist Nasr Abdul Aziz, and works by contemporary Arab artists.



# 4 World News

## ANC to elect Mbeki as party chief, Winnie possible deputy

MAFIKENG, South Africa (AFP) — The ruling African National Congress (ANC) prepared Wednesday to elect Deputy President Thabo Mbeki as party leader with Winnie Madikizela-Mandela as a dark horse for deputy.

Some 3,000 ANC delegates at a party congress were to vote in the party's six executive leaders in a tightly-guarded auditorium at the University of the North-West in this agricultural town.

Results are to be announced Thursday. While Ms. Madikizela-Mandela, President Nelson Mandela's ex-wife, has not been nominated, her supporters have said they will name her from the floor for the position of ANC deputy president.

And she has made it clear she intends to fight for the post, which was vacated by Mr. Mbeki who is the unanimous candidate to replace Mr. Mandela as party president.

So far, the only official candidate for the number

two post is the current party chairman, Jacob Zuma.

A broadly-smiling Winnie, 63, was mobbed by dozens of frenzied supporters on her arrival at the hall where ANC leaders were later to decide her political future.

As she stepped out of her luxury car, dressed in a fetching blue dress and sporting a beaded necklace, supporters surged forward and began dancing around her. They chanted "Winnie, Winnie" as she made her way into the hall where the ANC is holding its triennial conference.

As rules stand, she needs the support of 10 per cent of candidates for a successful nomination, but ANC leaders opposed to her bid for a senior post plan to push through a new rule which will require 25 per cent support.

Winnie's admirers who welcomed her Wednesday believed they would rally enough signatures from the floor, no matter what threshold is set.

"We support her for what she did for us," one chanting delegate, who gave his name only as Jacob, said. "She is strong and stands by her words. We love her so much."

At the last moment, journalists were allowed to enter a fiery first session of the conference Wednesday, during which voting rules were to be discussed and nominations finalised.

"Today there is going to be action," one delegate said. Mr. Mandela and his former wife hugged at the end of the South African president's marathon speech Tuesday, putting their bitter divorce behind them — for the cameras at least.

But Mr. Mandela, who is known to be opposed to her election to any position within the ANC, also urged delegates to choose strong leaders for the new millennium.

"These leaders whom you must elect democratically — hopefully uninfluenced by demagoguery, selfish promotion and self-

serving media — will continue a struggle which we ourselves inherited," Mr. Mandela said, in what has been interpreted as a reference to his ex-wife.

Mr. Mandela was given an emotional, warm farewell after delivering a blistering, four-and-a-half hour final speech as ANC president Tuesday, when he warned against white "counter-revolutionaries" still attached to the privileges of apartheid.

Mr. Mbeki is widely expected to become South African president in the 1999 election for head of state, which will conclude the 79-year-old Mandela's gradual retirement from politics.

If his ex-wife Ms. Madikizela-Mandela is successful in her party election bid, she could rise to the country's second-ranking post.

However Mr. Zuma, 55, is the favourite of both the ANC's historic leader, Nelson Mandela, and his designated successor, Thabo Mbeki, in this poll.



Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama (left) and his Russian counterpart Yevgeny Primakov (right) hug each other prior to a European Atlantic Partnership Council at NATO headquarters in Brussels (Reuters photo)

## NATO tells Russia new alliance structure 'non-negotiable'

BRUSSELS (AFP) — NATO Wednesday denied that it had agreed to hold talks with Russia next year on the level of military installations it will establish in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland after they join the alliance in 1999.

Commenting on reports from Moscow that this had been agreed, a NATO official said: "It's false. This is an internal NATO question and it is non-negotiable."

Interfax news agency in Moscow cited foreign ministry officials as saying that the issue of infrastructure would be part of the agenda for 1998 meetings of the NATO-Russia Joint Council, established this summer in a bid to smooth over the tensions created by NATO's eastward expansion.

The programme of talks was due to be discussed at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers and their Russian counterpart Yevgeny Primakov here later Wednesday.

NATO has always insisted that it will do whatever it judges necessary to guarantee the security of the three new member states.

But, as part of its efforts to reach an understanding with Moscow, it has voluntarily declared that, for the foreseeable future, it sees no military rationale for stationing nuclear weapons or building major new infrastructure on the new member states' territory.

The importance of this tacit deal has been underlined by the existing allies' refusal to accept Poland's

request to have a sub-regional NATO command located on its territory.

Under current plans, NATO envisages having to spend a relatively modest \$1.5 billion over ten years to integrate the three countries.

Most of the money is earmarked for new communications systems to allow their military forces to operate alongside NATO troops.

The only significant new weaponry the three countries will obtain will be western anti-aircraft defences. The three former Warsaw Pact countries Tuesday signed protocols for their accession to NATO. Their entry to the alliance must however be ratified by the parliaments of the 16 existing allies.

## Apparent battle brewing over revised Cambodian election date

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A battle erupted Wednesday over the date of Cambodia's general election after strongman Hun Sen insisted the poll be held in May as planned after a parliamentary committee said it should be postponed until November.

"At this point the position of the government is still to have the election on May 23, 1998," the second prime minister told reporters after opening a Japanese-funded water distribution project.

"For the government, there is no delay," he said, adding he had spoken with co-Interior Minister Sar Kheng, who had proposed postponing the polls for technical reasons.

"This morning, I told Sar Kheng that the government strongly requests the May 23 date," he said, adding, however, that the National Assembly would have the final say.

Tuesday, parliament's election committee adopted a proposal to delay the election for seven months until Nov. 22 citing technical problems. The committee was to meet again Wednesday to finalise a draft which is expected to be presented to the full assembly this week after it is reviewed by King Norodom Sihanouk.

Sar Kheng told MPs Tuesday that elections in May — the fifth anniversary of Cambodia's U.N.-brokered elections — was no longer feasible as preparations, including voter registration, had not begun. He suggested July 31 and Oct. 18 as alternatives. But the parliamentary committee rejected those dates in favour of Nov. 22.

They said July 31 fell in the middle of the monsoon season and Oct. 18 was still too early for all the election requirements to be met. However, in a sign of a compromise between Hun Sen's position and the Nov. 22 date, there were indications the committee might either restore Sar Kheng's alternatives or eliminate the date from the election law all together and leave the decision to the national electoral commission.

Adding to the maelstrom, dissident Sam Rainsy Wednesday said that any move to delay the election until after May 23 would be illegal as the constitution gave the people the right to vote for its government every five years.

"The delay is illegal," he told reporters, claiming that Hun Sen, his Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and some corrupt MPs had ulterior motives for delaying

the poll and extending the mandate of parliament.

He said he and a small group of his allies in parliament would fight the proposed postponement.

The international community has been monitoring preparations for the election since July when Hun Sen effectively ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who is now in exile facing criminal charges.

Foreign donors have made it clear that unless the election is "free, fair and credible" — understood to mean the prince be allowed to participate — aid programmes suspended after July will not resume.

The international community has not yet registered any opposition to the proposed delay and diplomats in Phnom Penh have said a delay may actually increase the chances for the election being free and fair. Several noted that Hun Sen's opposition to the delay may be a carefully crafted stance designed to shift potential criticism for it from the prince and others to the assembly.

"He needs legitimacy," said an Asian diplomat. "He can't be seen to be encouraging or supporting a delay."

## Yeltsin could leave hospital late this week

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin is recovering well from a viral chest infection and could leave the hospital late this week, his spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky said Wednesday.

"The president's health is satisfactory," Mr. Yastrzhembsky told reporters. "All the catarrhal symptoms are eliminated and the effects of the virus are completely eradicated."

Asked if the 66-year-old Mr. Yeltsin would leave the hospital at the end of the week — the timeframe mentioned by doctors who admitted him last Wednesday — the spokesman said: "I am counting on it."

Mr. Yeltsin will speak Wednesday by telephone with German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and meet with his own chief of staff, Mr. Yastrzhembsky said.

When he was admitted to the Barvikha rest home outside Moscow last week, doctors diagnosed the president as having an acute viral respiratory infection and said he would need to stay there 10 to 12 days.

Mr. Yastrzhembsky said this schedule still applied, and denied reports from Moscow Echo radio that Mr. Yeltsin would stay in the hospital until the Orthodox Christmas on Jan. 7.

He also said television crews would film the president Thursday, although he did not say when this footage would be broadcast.

He did not rule out the possibility of Mr. Yeltsin being in condition to make his weekly radio address, which he usually does Friday.

Meanwhile the surgeon who carried out a quintuple coronary bypass on Mr. Yeltsin in November of last year denied that the president's latest hospital stay had anything to do with that operation.

Renat Akhmerov told the magazine Argumenty I Fakty: "But any person who has caught a chill must be placed under medical supervision. I would even say, out of superstition, that one must take no risks."

He recalled that a previous chill of Mr. Yeltsin's — in January, during convalescence from the heart operation — had developed into pneumonia.

## India's Congress suffers polls setback as ally turns to nationalists

MADRAS, India (AFP) — India's beleaguered Congress (I) Party suffered a major setback before next year's general elections here Wednesday when a long-standing ally turned down a new alliance, officials said.

The AIADMK party, based in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, announced it would instead team up with the main opposition Hindu nationalists, Congress' bitter rival.

Jayalalitha Jayaram, a film actress-turned politician and former state chief minister, said the AIADMK would contest the polls campaign in Tamil Nadu with the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party).

The former actress argued only the right-wing BJP could form an "able and stable government" after the elections, expected to be held in February.

The move has dealt a bitter blow to the Congress, which is trying to return to power after suffering its worst electoral defeat in 1996.

The party, relying on socialist-style policies, ruled India for almost 40 years after independence. It fought last year's elections and those of 1991

alongside the AIADMK and is currently trying to forge a series of alliances across the country in a bid to lend a coalition back to power.

Ms. Jayalalitha, however, whose party heads the opposition in Tamil Nadu, said: "In recent months there has been instability at the centre which has adversely affected the interests of the country."

Elections in India were called last month after Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's minority United Front coalition resigned after losing Congress' crucial support.

The election dates are due to be announced on Jan. 5. Ms. Jayalalitha, compared to Imelda Marcos because of her wildly expensive lifestyle and who is currently under investigation for corruption, added: "In the interest of a stable and able government... we have decided to align with the BJP."

Analysts say the Congress, the party once led by the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, now has virtually no electoral prospects in Tamil Nadu, a state of 55 million people which accounts for 40 of the 545 seats in the Lower House of Parliament.

The current party ruling

Tamil Nadu, the DMK, is part of the outgoing multi-party United Front coalition.

Wednesday's announcement, meanwhile, will be a major morale boost for the BJP, which overtook Congress as India's largest parliamentary party in the 1996 elections.

The party, accused by its rivals of nationalism and of following a religious agenda, is also currently trying to launch a series of regional alliances after failing to establish a viable one-party government.

It won 162 seats in the April-May elections last year but its government fell within a fortnight after failing to prove its majority.

The Congress, the runner-up with around 140 seats, then dropped up the United Front, an alliance of more than a dozen parties, to keep the BJP from power.

But the Congress' uneasy co-habitation with the Front finally ended last month after the DMK was implicated in the 1991 political assassination of former Congress premier Rajiv Gandhi.

The Front refused Congress demands to drop the DMK, arguing the charges had not been proved.

## 3 wounded as Indian police fire on Kashmir demonstrators

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Three persons were wounded Wednesday when police fired on Muslims protesting against the destruction of a holy Islamic shrine in an accidental fire in Indian Kashmir.

Police said some 5,000 people marched on the streets of Tral town, 50 kilometres south of Srinagar, to denounce the destruction of a 700-year-old Muslim shrine there late Tuesday, police said.

Police and hospital sources said police fired on the demonstrators after they

hurled stones and shouted anti-government slogans. They said three people were hit by bullets.

Earlier, residents of the town said fire tenders failed to reach the site quickly, leading to the wooden shrine of Shahi Hamdan, the founder of Islam in Kashmir, burning to the ground.

Police said an electrical short-circuit caused the blaze.

The Tral shrine is the second historic Islamic religious structure to have been destroyed in a fire in

Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

In May 1995, Kashmir's holiest Muslim shrine in the northern town of Char-e-Sharif was destroyed in a fire that raged during a gun-battle between Muslim militants and the Indian army.

A Muslim separatist drive in Indian-administered Kashmir has claimed more than 20,000 lives since 1989. India blames neighbouring Pakistan, which holds part of the disputed state, of fomenting insurgency. Islamabad denies the charge.

## China unveils new system to catch bike thieves

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese police will soon be able to pick out at a glance bicycle thieves hiding among the crowd of 450 million bike riders, the official Xinhua news agency revealed Wednesday.

After March 1, bicycles will sport a registration plate endowed with a detachable central section. When riders park their bicycles in the street, they need only take with them this part, and replace it when they remount.

If the vehicle is stolen in the meantime, the thief is easily spotted by the hole in the licence plate.

## Study favours angioplasty to drug therapy

CHICAGO (R) — Angioplasty enhances the short-term survival prospects of heart attack victims in comparison to clot-dissolving drug therapy, especially among those at greater risk of strokes, researchers said Tuesday.

In a review of previous studies involving more than 2,500 patients who suffered heart attacks, researchers at the Heart and Vascular Institute of the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit determined that angioplasty saved an additional 21 lives per 1,000 patients.

In angioplasty procedures, a tiny balloon is threaded through clogged or narrowed coronary arteries to allow greater blood flow. With drug therapy, the medications streptokinase or tissue-type plasminogen activator are introduced to dissolve blood clots.

The risk of mortality after 30 days was 4.4 per cent for the patients treated with angioplasty compared to 6.5 per cent for those treated with drugs.

"Angioplasty is superior to drug therapy, at least in

the short-term treatment of heart attack patients," study author Douglas Weaver said.

The study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, also found angioplasty compared favourably with drug treatment in reducing the number of patients who subsequently suffered non-fatal heart attacks or strokes.

Mr. Weaver wrote that further research was needed to determine if angioplasty proves superior to drug therapy over the longer term.

Two Canadian researchers writing in an accompanying editorial agreed the research needed long-term follow-up with an assessment of cost-effectiveness.

"Angioplasty is at least a reasonable alternative to (drug) therapy in high-risk patients, and in expert hands, may be preferred in patients prone to stroke, such as the elderly," Hamilton (Ontario) health sciences corp. Researchers Salim Yusuf and Janice Pogue wrote in the Journal.



## Paris court examines murder charge at Carlos trial

PARIS (AFP) — The Paris Assize Court was set to examine a triple murder charge against "Carlos the Jackal" on the fourth day of his trial Wednesday.

Venezuelan-born Carlos, whose real name is Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, faces spending the rest of his life behind bars for the 1975 murders of two French policemen and a Lebanese informer.

One of his former women friends, Nydia Tobon, a Colombian who recounted in a 1978 book how Carlos had admitted in a telephone call to shooting several people in the 1975 incident, was in court and was expected to be called to testify.

The shooting took place June 27, 1975 in a flat in Paris' Latin Quarter, when three unarmed officers, members of France's DST counter-intelligence service, armed with Carlos' former friend and political ally Michel Moukharbil.

He and two of the officers were shot at close range by Carlos, who had been partying with friends and who then scrambled through a window to safety. It was his closest call until his eventual 1994 capture in a career across Europe and the Middle East believed to have caused scores of deaths.

Carlos has argued at the trial, which opened last Friday, that the Rue Toullier shoot-out was the result of "a plot by the Mossad," the Israeli secret service.

The scheduled examination of the circumstances of the killings by the court will be the first time the three judges and nine jurors will focus on the charges faced by the South American.

Tuesday, the packed courtroom heard an account of his life, from his childhood in Venezuela to his rise to international notoriety as one of the world's most wanted terrorists.

Speaking French with a thick Spanish accent, he talked about his Marxist lawyer father, his decision at 15 to join Venezuela's Communist Youth and his studies in London and in Moscow, at Patrice Lumumba University, then a revolutionary hotbed.

Asked whether he enjoyed studying chemistry in Moscow by presiding judge Yves Corneloup, Carlos said: "I'm an explosives expert, your honour. I'm even an instructor."

The Tuesday hearing on his past and on his character followed a controversial session Monday, in which his lawyers quit the court in protest against the trial.

A court-appointed lawyer, Olivier Moderate, is now defending the prisoner but has said he has not had sufficient time to examine the eight-volume prosecution case.

The 48-year-old defendant, elegantly turned-out each day of the hearings, has been staging his own defence, laughing and joking and apparently enjoying being in the public spotlight after three years of solitary confinement.

Captured by French agents in Sudan in 1994, Carlos says he was kidnapped and is being held and tried illegally in France.

In a move that may complicate the prosecution case, the former guerrilla fighter denied having given a 1979 interview to an Arabic-language paper — Al Watan Al Arabi — in which he confessed to a string of attacks in the 1970s, including the 1975 Rue Toullier killings.

"I have never given a press interview. This is a manipulation," he said. The interview was the only one ever attributed to Carlos.

After years with the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Carlos set up his own "terrorist international" of extremists such as Germany's Red Army Faction and the Japanese Red Army.



Homeless people sit at the central railway station in Warsaw where about 300 people found shelter from the cold. Wednesday temperatures in some regions of Poland plunged to minus 22 degrees Celsius (Reuters photo)

## 600 children struck down in Japan by flashing cartoon eyes

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese authorities launched an investigation Wednesday after more than 600 children were struck by convulsions, blurred vision or vomiting while watching a television cartoon.

A Home Affairs Ministry official said 685 people, mostly children, were taken to hospital after the programme Tuesday evening featuring the Pocket Monster, or "Pokemon."

Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK) said 208 people had been kept in hospital across the country for further treatment.

"We have not confirmed all of the causes of their sickness but we suspect most of the cases were caused by the television programme," the ministry official said.

The children momentarily lost vision or suffered convulsions after seeing Pikachu, one of the Pokemon characters, flash its eyes on television, officials said.

In one of the most striking scenes near the end of the programme, animated characters crept into a broken computer and fought villains amid bright flashing lights.

Psychologists said the phenomenon might be an epileptic effect induced by flashing light known as photosensitive epilepsy, or group hysteria.

Police questioned television officials and the case could be handled as one of unintentionally inflicting injury.

The National Police Agency ordered local police

offices to gather information on the programme, agency officials said.

Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto expressed concern and called for a special investigation.

"We need a study by experts because the impact of a certain kind of light or laser on eyes through television has not been proved yet," Mr. Hashimoto told reporters.

Cases of photosensitive epilepsy among children playing Japanese-made TV games have been reported in Japan, the United States and Britain.

"Given that they collapsed with their eyes irritated, there is the possibility of photosensitive epilepsy or group hysteria," said psychologist Rika Kayama, the author of a book on video games and health.

Other psychologists told Jiji Press the symptoms were probably caused by the combination of a sudden flash and flickering of lights.

The TV Tokyo Network, which aired the 30-minute programme, said it reported the case to the Post and Telecommunications Ministry which licenses broadcasters.

"We will postpone the resumption of the programme until we can find relations between the animation and the sickness," a network spokesman said.

Nintendo Co. Ltd. originated the cartoon and expected big shipments of video games using the characters ahead of Christmas, analysts said.

Nintendo said it was not to blame and criticised the net-

work for the way it aired the cartoon.

Nintendo President Hiroshi Yamauchi said Pokemon was in black and white on game equipment while the TV Tokyo programme was in colour.

"This situation is the problem of TV Tokyo's way of producing (the cartoon programme)," Mr. Yamauchi said.

Analysts warned the incident could damage the video game maker ahead of its peak sales period.

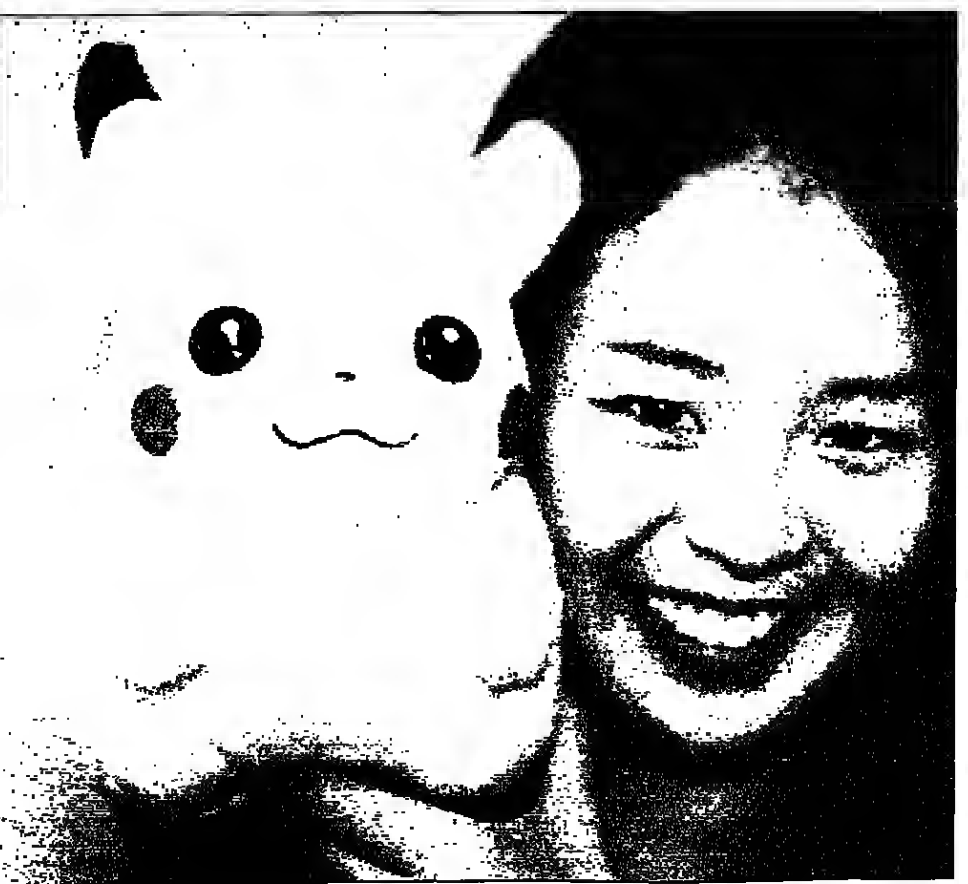
"The timing was extremely bad because it happened before Christmas and New Year's Day, the most important period for the industry," said Hironobu Sawake, a video game and toy analyst at Nikko Research Centre Ltd.

"The impact on Nintendo could be very big in the short term as Nintendo had expected much from the characters' game, which became this year's number one hit in the industry," Mr. Sawake said.

The news sent Nintendo's share price down 1.6 per cent to 12,500 yen, one of the few decliners Wednesday.

The Pocket Monster software for the portable screen game has become a smash hit, selling some 7.5 million units since February last year and generating huge sales of character merchandise.

The cartoon programme has been broadcast every Tuesday evening on 37 stations affiliated with the TV Tokyo Network since April with viewing rates averaging more than 17 per cent.



A young woman holds a stuffed toy, the mouse monster Pikachu, hero of a video game and animated television programme, "The Pocket Monster" (AFP photo)

## Russian elephants drink vodka to beat cold

MOSCOW (AFP) — Elephants at Moscow's Zoo have turned to tipping vodka to counter record cold temperatures in the Russian capital, the daily newspaper Moskovski

lets said Wednesday. Zoo keepers have resorted to serving up highly alcoholic beverages to the elephants to stop the beasts from freezing, as the temperature fell to minus 28.8

degrees Celsius Tuesday.

The Russian capital is shivering from the lowest temperatures on record, with a reading of minus 27.3 degrees Celsius Monday night.

## Arctic cold continues to kill in Eastern Europe

PARIS (AFP) — Europe continued to shiver Wednesday in the grip of an Arctic cold wave which killed at least 29 people in Eastern Europe, and left entire regions without heating or electricity.

At least 29 people, mainly homeless, died of cold in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Russia, and Ukraine, and the Republic of Daghestan declared a state of emergency as its entire population went without gas heating.

Poland suffered the heaviest death toll with 11 people reported dead Wednesday, most of them homeless or drunks having slept outside.

Seven homeless people died in Bucharest, the forensic institute in the Romanian capital said, raising the death toll from harsh weather to 17 since late October.

More victims were expected, the institute said, as the temperature in

Bucharest plunged to

minus 15 degrees Celsius. Most of Bulgaria was snowed-in, press reports said Wednesday, and four people died as the cold snap drove temperatures down to minus 12 degrees Celsius in the Bulgarian capital.

The frozen body of a woman was found in the southwestern city of Dobrich, and passers-by found the body of man in the streets of Pazardjik, in central Bulgaria.

A 47-year-old woman died of heart failure while waiting for a bus in Varna on the Black Sea in minus 10 degree Celsius weather.

Traffic, public transportation and electricity were severely disrupted in several parts of Bulgaria.

Although temperatures were on the rise throughout Russia, three people died of cold and 22 people were hospitalised in Moscow, as hundreds of fires ignited by makeshift heating were

reported in the capital.

In minus 35 degrees Celsius weather, eight people died overnight Tuesday in the central Russian city of Tula when a fire broke out in their building.

Inhabitants in the Black Sea resort of Sochi, who have been living without electricity, heating or water for over 24 hours, purposefully started fires in their staircases to fight the chill.

"We are no longer used to low temperatures because winters have been mild in the European part of Russia over the past years," the president of the Russian weather institute, Alexander Bedritski, told ITAR-TASS Agency.

Moscow witnessed its coldest Dec. 16 in history Tuesday, with thermometers marking minus 28.8 degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile, temperatures in Ukraine continued to fall reaching the record minus 35 degrees Celsius and killing four people. The

state of emergency has been declared in the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, where 220 towns are left without electricity, and in the Republic of Daghestan, no longer receiving any gas for its furnaces.

Elsewhere in Europe, cold weather forced school closures in Britain, caused dozens of traffic accidents on icy roads in Germany and Austria and caused huge traffic jams in French and Spanish cities.

Strong winds swept along Europe's Atlantic coast, reaching 120 kilometres per hour in Portugal, and road and maritime traffic in Greece and Yugoslavia were severely disrupted.

Meanwhile, most Scandinavian countries enjoyed particularly mild weather Wednesday, as Stockholm prepares for Christmas in snow-free streets and Iceland registered temperatures of seven degrees Celsius.

## S. Koreans go to the polls in close three-cornered race

SEOUL (AFP) — South Koreans go to the polls Thursday to decide whether a veteran dissident, a former Supreme Court judge or a young provincial governor should run the country for the next five years.

It is one of the closest races the country has known, and with just hours to go, there was no clear favourite in the three-cornered contest where the main issue for rich and poor alike is the country's economic crisis.

Vying for the presidential Blue House are the ex-judge, the majority party's Lee Hoi-Chang, 62, opposition veteran and former dissident Kim Dae-Jung, 73, and the youngest hopeful, Rhee In-Je, 49, of the New People's Party (NPP).

Informed sources said late Wednesday that Mr. Kim, despite his rivals' derisive charges that his age makes him unfit to lead South Korea into the 21st century, held a three per cent edge in a still uncertain electorate.

All three Wednesday stumped the politically-crucial Seoul area under overcast skies, claiming to be the only one competent to dig the nation out of its financial mess.

"Do you want an end to this crisis or do you want chaos?" asked the Grand National Party's (GNP) Mr. Lee, who is also an ex-prime minister.

"If you want stability and an end to this, I will give you that," said Mr. Lee.

Kim Dae-Jung of the main opposition National Congress

for New Politics (NCNP) has risked his life repeatedly and spent years in prison under former military governments for his political views.

But Wednesday he too was talking economics, reaffirming his commitment to abide by the terms of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement, saying he would meet IMF chief Michel Camdessus.

"If elected I will meet with Camdessus, and I will keep my promise to abide by the (IMF) agreement. But I will continue to negotiate on issues such as massive unemployment and insolvencies," he said.

"Let's get over this IMF," he added.

The feisty Rhee In-Je, who bolted the ruling GNP to set up

the NPP and run on his own, said "only a fresh leader can help the country."

Mr. Rhee has defiantly refused to listen to calls from the ruling GNP, which says he should quit the race because he was "simply splitting the conservative vote and helping Kim Dae-Jung."

"Good news, here it is split 50-50 between Rhee and Lee," Mr. Kim campaigner, Kim Dae-Sung, told AFP by telephone from the conservative-dominated southern city of Masan, what he called "the heart of the enemy camp" late Wednesday night.

The Central Election Management Committee (CEMC) has said it should start seeing a trend around midnight Thursday.

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## Diplomacy by gestures

**PRESIDENT BILL Clinton** has reacted favourably to conciliatory overtures by Iranian President Mohammad Khatami, and rightly so.

The Iranian leader recently extended an olive branch to Washington by stating that his country harbours no ill-feelings towards the American people upon whom he heaped praise. He had done that soon after establishing his credentials as a moderate who stands for constructive dialogue and peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts.

Khatami's statesmanship was all too evident at the recent Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, whether in remarks he made at the opening session or in later deliberations, when he sought to steer away from the discourse of radicalism and extremism and came down strongly on the side of reconciliation and accommodation with other religions and civilisations.

Though President Clinton's positive response to the bold challenge of a changed Iran is conditional, there is no doubt that a new relationship could emerge between the two countries. Two of President Clinton's caveats for cooperation, namely that Iran halt its alleged support for terrorism and support the Middle East peace process should not pose insurmountable problems. The Iranian president has already expressed his readiness not to frustrate Arab-Israeli negotiations or their legitimate goals. On terrorism, the new Iranian stance appears also to be accommodating.

A problem might remain over Iran's attempts to develop mass-destruction weapons and their means of delivery. On this score Washington cannot fairly pursue its declared policies in isolation from paying due attention to Israel's own programme for such weapons.

In any case a package deal needs to be articulated that would address the issue on a regional basis. This prerequisite explains, in part at least, why Israel would be the last country to want to see a thawing in relations between Washington and Tehran.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

**Al Arab Al Yawm's** Mohammed Subeini expressed his belief that the professional unions will soon find themselves on a colliding course with the government which is reportedly preparing a new law to govern the unions' work. Subeini said reports leaking from government sources say the new law will deprive employees of public and government organisations of the right of affiliation to these unions, and in this case the law will restrict the unions' current activities on all fronts. Of course the unions will not remain passive in the face of this measure and sooner or later they will have to enlist the support of Parliament to reach a middle ground with the government. The writer said it would be most unreasonable for the government to ignore tens of thousands of intellectuals' views when drawing up the new legislation and it is not in the interest of the country to prevent unions from drafting the way to the future. The writer said the government and the unions must come to an agreement through and with the help of Parliament and the government should respond favourably to the unions' desire to have a dialogue that would safeguard both parties' interests.

**Al Dustour's** Oreib Rintawi addressed Turkey's difficult position between East and West. He said Ankara has been meeting with one failure after another. It failed to join the European Union in view of its records on human rights and its occupation of northern Cyprus and faced an embarrassing situation at the Islamic summit in Tehran for its alliance with Israel against the Arab and Islamic World. Rintawi said, He said Ankara did not succeed in ridding itself of its Islamic and Oriental identity in order to enter Europe and subsequently it was barred from the EU and has not convinced the Islamic World of its Islamic identity either. He said Turkey is at a cross-roads and can not decide which way to turn simply because it is dominated by a military mentality, with the armed forces holding on tight to the reins of the nation.

## View from Academia

# Freedom and freedom abuse

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

WE IN JORDAN (and the Arab World and the world at large) are plagued by two extreme positions on freedom. The first — totalitarian, oligarchic and oppressive — calls for the curtailing of freedom (personal, political, social, economic, etc.) because the majority of people are not to be trusted to respect and appreciate it. Give them an inch, they take a mile. The second — utopian, idealistic, simplistic, careless and anarchic — is diametrically opposed, calling for the bestowing of freedom without limits. At times, the second comes as a reaction against the first; at times, the first comes as a reaction against the second. This is the way it goes in human history. Every action has a reaction equal to it in force though opposite to it in direction. In today's Arab World, because we have not enjoyed the freedom we have for so long craved, many of us are calling for freedom without bounds. This is perfectly understood, though by no means acceptable. One extreme breeds another extreme.

These two opposed positions still exist in our society, and at all levels. The first reflects itself, for example, in parents who do not allow their children to express themselves even in the simplest of matters and to participate in decisions related to the family as a whole. Some parents do not allow their children to make decisions regarding their own personal lives; there are parents (usually fathers) who choose not only the university which their son/daughter ought to attend but the very discipline they have to specialise in. Some even interfere in the choice of their children's life-time partners. Yes, this happens even now, in 1997.

Such position reflects itself also in husbands who oppress their wives, in teachers who come to lecture and dictate information to students, in school headmasters who silence both students and teachers, in civil servants who are law worshippers (using the law or rule against you but never for you), in committee heads who do not listen to their fellow committee members, in ruthless administrators of all types and at all levels, in seniors who do not respect juniors, and yes in some (perhaps even many) government officials. Where do government officials come from, anyway? From the parents, husbands, teachers, headmasters, committee members, administrators, etc. All of the above-mentioned (and many others not mentioned) are obviously abusers of freedom: the freedom they are given to rule and oppress and the freedom they deny others.

The second position reflects itself also in parents who have neglected the noble calling of parenting and permit their children to function and exist without supervision; look at the so-called popular areas in our part of the world where the children live practically in the street from dawn to dusk doing whatever they see fit (we have to take this dimension into account when we speak so gloriously of the so-called "man in the street," shouldn't we?). And it reflects itself in permissive teachers, headmasters, civil servants, administrators, taxi drivers, mechanics, etc.

Look at our public roads: the way people drive, without paying attention to signs, rules or laws; look at the way they litter. Is this the freedom we want? Clearly, all of this is abuse of freedom. The situation in our society is disorderly, chaotic, and anarchic in many ways, due to a false sense that we have of freedom.

Usually, however, proponents of freedom in the Arab

World confine themselves to talking about political freedom or freedom of expression in the media and the press. And they usually resort to Western democracy to justify their arguments. I am all for freedom of expression (by everyone) and all for political freedom (for everyone) — and so are the majority of Jordanians, I believe. But while fighting for the freedom of everyone to express, we have to take the following into account: otherwise our vision of freedom will be shortsighted and our position will be at best selfish and naïve.

A) Why should discourse about freedom in our part of the world be almost exclusively confined to political freedom? Why not talk also about freedom in the various societal spheres which are equally important? For everybody political freedom is important, but for everybody also other types of freedom are equally significant. The number of those individuals who address political freedom (ordinary people, intellectuals, writers, etc.) far outweighs the number of those who address the other types of freedom. This imbalance needs to be rectified. Very few people in our society are talking about child abuse, woman abuse, student abuse, crimes of honour, road abuse, etc. A truck driver who parks his monstrous, noisy, and poisonous machine amidst people's homes in our "popular" areas is as abusive (perhaps more abusive) of people's freedom (the freedom to live in peace and in a healthy environment) as those who deny them freedom of expression. How come we do not hear much about this?

B) Why should freedom of expression be almost always synonymous to criticism of the government, as if the only cause of our problems in the Arab World is the government and as if the government has magic solutions for everything? The "man in the street" is holy, "ordinary people" are saints; the government is villainous. Why do the critics of the government hesitate to criticise also the other abusers of freedom: the dictatorial father, the oppressive husband, the irresponsible truck driver and the various violators of rules and laws? Along the same lines, when we talk about democracy we are not talking about two essential components: the government and the governed? Why do we have much to say about the former (and usually negatively) and almost nothing to say about the latter. The so-called "ordinary man" in our part of the world is neither all that pure nor all that innocent. It is he or she who drives maniacally on our streets; it is he or she who litters the public roads and outcrops areas. I wonder if we should blame the government for a Mercedes-500 motorist (perhaps a graduate of a fine Western school and a proponent of Western democracy) who throws Pepsi cans from the window of his/her Mercedes?

C) When we think and talk about freedom of expression, we must also think and talk about empowering people to express. Empowerment takes a variety of forms, not least among which is the ability to express. What happens on our public roads (the chaos, danger, and carnage resulting from car accidents) is a metaphor for what happens elsewhere in the various societal spheres. In my humble opinion, a driver who speeds maniacally and disobeys road signs is as dangerous and subversive (and in need of education) as a speaker on issues who does not know when and where to

step on the brakes. Such speakers are causing ample damage to a public which does not distinguish much between a blabber and a person with substance. I would say that our main problem in this part of the world is not so much the absence of freedom of expression as in fact the overabundance of emotional, nonsensical and irresponsible expression. Anyone who is unable to see this does not know our society.

D) Democracy is neither oligarchy nor anarchy. Where do some people get the idea that democracy (including Western democracy) is based on absolute freedom of expression? Democracy allows responsible freedom only. Democracy is based on rules, laws, regulations, and discipline. If you defame anyone in the West (be it an ordinary citizen or a government official) you can be taken to court. If the Jordan Times asks a writer to make some "subtle" changes and to knock out some "inappropriate" expressions, is it a dictatorial newspaper? Are not "subtlety" and "appropriateness" of expression a virtue and bluntness and inappropriateness a vice? Does not the New York Times or even the Cornell Daily Sun require that much. Those who do not know how and when to step on brakes when they speak are offensive and subversive, whether in our informal occasions and get-togethers or in our public political life. It is our job to educate and empower them.

But democracy (as courses even at the freshman level teach us) is a process. You can't expect a society to become democratic overnight (especially the society of abusive motorists, environment polluters, and law breakers). How long did Western democracy take to evolve, develop and reach the level it has reached. And yet until now (and not only during the McCarthy era), it is still far from perfect. What Jordan has achieved in the realm of democracy since 1989 is phenomenal. Anyone who is unable to see that is both ungrateful and ignorant. The Jordanian leadership deserves a big applause, and so do the successive Jordanian governments which played a role in the introduction and nourishment of democracy in the country. I believe that we should criticise the Jordanian government when it does something unwise or when it fails to act on something positive (it is the duty of us Jordanians to do so), but I believe that it is our duty also to praise it and encourage it when it does something positive. What it has done in the realm of democracy is praiseworthy, even though we still expect it to do more. Too much praise is hypocrisy, but too much criticism is heresy. Similarly, failure to criticise when criticism is due is treason, but failure to give praise when praise is due is pure ungratefulness.

Two things bother me with respect to discourse on democracy in our part of the world: A) flagrant violation of it either by totalitarianism and oppressors who want to deprive others of it or the anarchists and idiots who abuse it in its own name and B) flagrant ignorance of its meaning even by those who live and study in Western democratic countries (like the author of the letter to the editor, J.T., Dec. 14.) who ought to know better.

Democracy is abused when we deny its benefits to others, but is also abused when we misunderstand it and have a lot of nonsense to say about it.

## LETTERS

### Refugees revisited

To the editor:

I AGREE with Mr. Sadi (Letters to the editor, Jordan Times, Dec. 17) that refugee status, like any piece of law, should be considered in "its wide context." What I do not agree with is his characterisation of this context. Unfortunately, many of the arguments made in his article are ones governments often resort to either for non-ratification or for restrictive application of the '51 Convention. May I respond to a few points made in his reply. I will only tackle the legal and factual aspects. I will not even attempt to delve into the ethics of it.

Jordan is not the only country in the world "that finds itself in a region torn by armed conflicts and civil strife." The '51 Convention is ratified, for example, by most of the African states. These areas are as affected by violence and forced migration as the Middle East, if not more, yet they were willing to satisfactorily apply the basic provisions of the refugee regime. A quick look at the Great Lakes, Southern Africa, and West Africa would prove this point. Latin America would provide another example. Political, social and security matters are accounted for in the convention. A state may exclude criminals or persons who are a threat to security from the application of the convention (Articles I.F, 32, 33.2).

The threat of harming the Palestinians' political aspirations and identity is also unfounded. Palestinians are excluded under Art. I.D. from the convention. This exclusion was incorporated pursuant to pressures from the Arab states for the exact reason of not affecting the Palestinian situation. Mr. Sadi seems to argue that the convention is both too wide in that it would allow asylum seekers to "ruin the infrastructure" and too narrow for not accounting for persecution by non-governmental sources. Both arguments are legally unfounded. As to the first argument, a country may bar refugees from entry in cases of mass influx that would impose unreasonable burdens (see for example Tanzania's recent closure of its borders to Burundi refugees). The irony in this position is that Jordan has, de facto, never prevented refugees from entering its territory. It is, anyway, under a customary legal obligation not to return (refouler) refugees to areas where they fear persecution.

As to the second, it is accepted now that refugee status arises if the state fails its duty of protection. This means cases where the state is unwilling or unable to protect its citizens from persecution conducted by private agents.

Of course the application of the convention has been "tainted with abuse and exploitation." However, if we follow that argument in favour of non-ratification, then we would not ratify any human rights treaty. One of the more important functions of international human rights law is the setting of normative standards that provide bases for judging the legitimacy of state actions. No realistic analyst of international law would expect immediate and full compliance with the tenets thereof. This does not, however, lessen its importance.

As to the argument that the application of refugee status is still characterised by "whim" and "wide discretion," I believe that there is a serious mixing of issues here. Of course there is discretion in the application of the law. Discretion is a central and inevitable feature of law. As long as law is not applied by robots, discretion will exist. However, there is a big difference between rule-bound discretion, where the boundaries of legitimacy are demarcated, and unfettered discretion where anything goes. The application of the convention has been as "unpredictable" as any civil, criminal, or administrative case. If predictability were to mean certainty, then there would be no need for judges and lawyers.

Borderline cases where the outcome is not certain constitute the majority of all legal cases.

The '51 Convention is not perfect. It is too restrictive, it does not cover all the situations in the contemporary world, and there is no international mechanism for supervising its application. However, it, like the rest of international law, only provides minimum standards. A state party may apply more favourable provisions to refugees (Art. 61). It is the only global piece of law for the protection of refugees. If we are to take refugee rights seriously, I still maintain that we must ratify the convention.

Ghaith Al-Omari  
Wolfson College  
University of Oxford

### Seeing it black and white

To the editor:

I DISAGREE with Mr. Walid Maaytah on his criticism (Letters to the editor, Jordan Times, Dec. 17) of Mr. Marwan Hanania's letter to the editor (Jordan Times, Dec. 14), and I find his comments inappropriate, non-constructive, and somewhat personal in nature.

Democracy does not come in phases, nor is it a grey area. It is a black and white issue; we either have it or we don't.

Marwan M. Atalla  
Amman

### Ask the industrialists

To the editor:

WE HEAR yet again of government officials' concern about the failure of Jordanian industries at a time when we are attempting to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Tamam Al Ghoul, director of the WTO office at the Ministry of Industry, said in a recent lecture that industrialists are concerned about lowering tariffs on imported goods. As an industrialist I agree, although for different reasons than those stated by Ms. Al Ghoul.

Most industrialists in Jordan are fully aware that without attaining high standards in their products there is no way we can compete against imported products. Most industrialists also do not want to hide behind a wall of protectionism to insure that their products sell. We are concerned, however, that all we hear from government officials is that Jordan will reduce tariffs on imported goods without accompanying the hike with reductions on tariffs on raw materials which are used in manufacturing.

It is about time that the government stops messing around in reducing tariffs on a limited number of raw materials every few months and instead declares a reduction of custom tax to zero on all imported raw materials that go into manufacturing. Only then will we, as industrialists, be able to look confidently at a better future.

Marwan Nassar,  
General Manager  
Jordan Rubber Industries Co. Amman

## Fresh approach to U.S.-Iran relations

By Najmedin Meshkati and Guive Mirfendereski

LOS ANGELES — The recent assembly in Tehran of two dozen heads of state and high-level officials representing some 55 countries officially marked the eighth meeting of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. It also marked the symbolic death of the U.S. policy of "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq. Specifically, the gathering marked the utter failure of the U.S. attempt to isolate Iran.

Policies of restriction or containment through economic mechanisms do not work. In a porous world, sanctions are largely ineffective: Saddam Hussein is still in power, and the regimes in North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba have survived in spite of comprehensive U.S. sanctions.

When U.S. policy has been successful it has been based on constructive or positive engagement. The ending of apartheid in South Africa and of communism in Eastern Europe, Arab-Israeli peace talks, protection of U.S. intellectual property rights in China — all these things have come about because of influence through involvement.

The extension of U.S. policy to the actions of other countries compounds the error. By pressuring Russia to cancel its \$1 billion contract to sell nuclear reactors to Iran, the United States is unintentionally taking a risk that could have dire consequences.

Iran, determined to develop its nuclear energy capability, is likely to acquire components for nuclear reactor systems through various means — from many sources that could be scattered throughout various countries.

Technically, this effort could result in a piecemeal assemblage of potentially incompatible parts of dubious reliability in an untested reactor.

As the world learned after the April 1986 accident at Chernobyl, a nuclear accident anywhere is a nuclear accident everywhere. A hastily or secretly designed, untested Iranian nuclear reactor operating with obsolete safety systems would certainly pose a high risk to people and the environment across the Northern Hemisphere.

In these times, the best control in technological matters is through the systemic integration of national technologies. Tight integration,

interdependence and correlation among technologies of different countries would provide much more oversight, control and assurance than do unilateral policies of restrictions and isolation.

The U.S. deal with North Korea for developing and installing nuclear reactors is a step in the right direction and is a good example of this new paradigm in foreign policy.

When it comes to building relationships, the United States should follow the recipe it used in dealing with such ideological adversaries as the Soviet Union, China and Vietnam.

The United States might want to consider as a goodwill overture the unblocking of Iranian assets frozen since the 1979-80 hostage crisis. It could do so the next time there is a natural or environmental disaster in Iran. The United States could unfreeze the assets — with no strings attached — to allow the Iranian government to cope with the humanitarian requirements of the situation.

A willingness on the part of either the United States or Iran to admit that one day there will be a meaningful relationship between the two is the first step towards that eventual reality.

The United States needs to see Iran as part of the solution to the problems in the Middle East. But first Washington and Tehran must simply be able to communicate on matters of mutual interest. Resolving their differences can come later.

As the Tehran gathering demonstrated, Iran is isolated mostly in the minds of U.S. policy makers. And it is U.S. interests that suffer. By not reckoning with Iran as a major player in the Middle East, the United States deprives the American private sector of a lucrative market, widens the gap with its allies and deepens the stagnation in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

A fresh and bold approach to U.S.-Iran relations is not only desirable, it is imperative for U.S. national interests.

Najmedin Meshkati is an associate professor of engineering at the University of Southern California. Guive Mirfendereski is a professor of international law at Brandeis University. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

talk

radio to disks?

last time it was

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## chip talk

## Is it adieu to flopp disks?

By Jean-Claude Elias

ONE OF the longest serving components in personal computers is about to say goodbye. Or is it?

Amongst the many standards available for disk storage, the 3.5" floppy disk, holding a modest 1.44MB (MB = million bytes or characters), has the merit to have sustained many years without a change. Whereas in the meantime numerous other formats have appeared and disappeared, sometimes in less than a year, the 1.44MB floppy has survived against all odds. It has been around for an impressive, record-breaking 11 years.

Most of us have trusted the format to keep important files. The 1.44MB disk has been more practical and reliable than any other similar media. But with the ever-increasing size of the files we are now manipulating, the good old floppy is just not enough anymore. Not only its capacity has become unsuitable for most applications, its transfer rate also — the speed at which it can record and retrieve information — has become much too slow for the new programmes and applications.

It is very common now to have personal files with sizes of 2 to 8MB each. If you are downloading data from the Internet, storing digital pictures or photographs, recording digital audio, or simply keeping a large data base of information you know that files size often exceed 5 or 10MB each. None of this can be stored on floppies, and even if they could it would take hours just to open one of these large files from floppies, not to mention any additional processing.

The resourceful computer industry is proposing several solutions. The problem precisely lies in the "several." Models of removable disks, referred to as cartridges, abound. From the 100MB Zip disk by Iomega to the 2GB Jaz (2 billion bytes or characters) also by Iomega, including Bernoulli's 120MB system and Syquest's offering of different capacities ranging from 120 to 350MB, the choice is yours. In total 8 formats are available. All of these disks work well and fast. Most of them are of excellent manufacturing quality and provide enhanced reliability and data security over the 1.44MB floppy. The problem is the incompatibility between them all. The cartridges work only with the drive that is specifically designed for them.

Iomega's 100MB Zip disk has proved the most popular so far. The company has sold more than 10 million such disk drives and 100 million Zip disks/cartridges for them. Some computer manufacturers like Gateway have already adopted the Zip100 and are including it as a standard feature in their new machines. While not being the fastest, the Zip is the most practical and is attractively priced at about JD120 for the drive system and JD18 for each disk/cartridge. What may qualify it as a successor for the 1.44MB disk could well be its popularity and the large number of units sold, establishing a base for compatibility and user exchange.

The story of the 1.44MB floppy can be compared to the standard music cassette. Launched in 1964, the cassette remains the most popular support to record music and listen to it. Even today, a technically much superior media like the audio CD has not killed the cassette. It remains practical, inexpensive and extremely popular. Like the music cassette, the 1.44MB floppy may well prove to be a die-hard too.

Society on the move  
All in the name of loyalty

Nasser Lawzi

At last week's session of Parliament during which deputies were to decide on whether to grant the government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majoli a vote of confidence, one deputy's vote hinged on an issue of marital status. Deputy Bargis Haidid of Amman's 4th District slipped a note in Minister of Public Works Nasser Lawzi threatening to withhold his vote in favour of confidence unless Mr. Lawzi agreed to step over the threshold and enter the bonds of matrimony. Mr. Lawzi, 41, a die-hard bachelor, has certainly grown accustomed to the goading of relatives, friends and even colleagues about his single status, but perhaps this never been so held to ransom. Rising to the occasion, accepting the challenge and dutifully demonstrating his allegiance to his fellow cabinet members, Mr. Lawzi nodded his reply. Nuptials would be forthcoming within a year, he promised the smirking deputy. Personals on Mr. Lawzi (for potential candidates only): a Pisces, a graduate of University of Texas at Arlington, witty, kind, loves to dance, great parents, and oh yes, his nickname is Abu Ahmad.

**IN THEIR HONOUR:** While the government seeks to draft laws in fine-tune guidelines for the country's professional associations, one such group wasted no time in honouring a few of its own who are now members of the Parliament. The Jordanian Businessmen's Association last night hosted a reception at the Regency Palace Hotel for seven of its members now seated in the legislature. The members are Senators Abdul Korim Kabariti, Hamdi Tubboa, and Taher Kanaan, and Deputies Ali Abul Ragheb, Samir Kavar, Khalil Haddadin and Hazem Momani.

**ENVOY APPROVED:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointment of Mohammad Tawfiq Khalidi as Jordan's new ambassador to Sudan has been approved by Parliament. Mr. Khalidi is a career diplomat who served in Greece, India, Tunisia, and at the United Nations mission in New York. He was most recently posted to the embassy in Cairo where he became chargé d'affaires after Ambassador Nayef Qadi was appointed as a member of the Upper House of Parliament on Nov. 22. Mr. Khalidi succeeds Mohammad Shabankari, who returned to Amman. No doubt Mr. Khalidi will be a warmly welcomed guest at Sudanese Ambassador Omar Abdul Majid's reception on Sunday, Nov. 21, at the Philadelphia Hotel on the occasion of Sudan's national day.

**CREDENTIALS RECEIVED:** In Ankara Jordan's new Ambassador to Turkey Dr. Musa Breizat

presented his credentials to President Suleiman Demirel. President Demirel conveyed his greetings to His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan and discussed with Dr. Breizat bilateral relations and the latest political developments in the region. Dr. Breizat, who was a member of Jordan's delegation to the peace talks with Israel assumes his first ambassadorial appointment in a country that has recently taken some controversial steps in its relations in the region, particularly its nascent trade and defence ties with Israel.

**PSD LINE UP:** At the Public Security Department Lieutenant General Nasouh Mohehdalin Wednesday announced the transfers of 19 senior officers and the retirement of 23 other officers effective today, Dec. 18. The major transfers include: Col. Fakhri Iskandar from director of the Traffic Department to director of Highway Patrols; Col. Adnan Shamailah from director of Agaba Police Department to Director of the Traffic Department; Col. Musa Beni Yunis from director of Mafrqa Police Department to director of the Tourist Police Department; Col. Mohammad Hanouri director of the Construction Department to director of the Swaga Rehabilitation Centre; Col. Abdul Rahman Rousan from head of the Inspector General's Office to director of the Residents and Borders Department; Lt. Col. Mohammad Rifai from the Residents and Borders Department to director of the Public Relations Department; Lt. Col. Nabil Kawasmi from the Police Court to the Traffic Department; and Lt. Col. Mohammad Zawnhreh from the Police Training Academy to the Amman Police Department.

Also Wednesday Interior Minister Naji Rashid appointed Imran Khamash, a governor at the ministry, as director of the Nationality and Aliens Department, and appointed District Governor Mohammad Breikat as director of the Public Safety Department at the ministry. Mr. Rashid also transferred District Governor Sa'ad Wadi Manaseer from the ministry to Jerash as district governor.

**BACK TO TOKYO:** Last night the Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura and his wife Kazuko hosted a reception to celebrate the birthday of Emperor Hirohito, Ambassador and Mrs. Kimura also made use of the occasion to start to bid farewell to their friends and associates in Jordan. Mr. Kimura, who arrived in Jordan two and a half years ago is expected to return to Tokyo to take up a still undecided position at his foreign ministry's headquarters. The Kimura family, including their daughter and son, are expected to leave Jordan in mid-January. Succeeding Mr. Kimura will be Kaiji Matsumoto, a member of the board of JICA, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency based in Tokyo and operating a representative office in Amman. For Mr. Matsumoto this will be his first appointment as an ambassador of his country. He and his family are due to arrive in Jordan in mid-February. Last night's large reception at the embassy residence in Abdoun was attended by among others HRH Prince Raad Bin Zeid, Securities Commission Chairman Michel Maro, and Housing Bank Chairman Zuheir Khoury. The popular event was held under tight security provided by both Jordanian and Japanese authorities.

Japanese embassies have taken added precautions for security since last year when Fervent members of the Rupas Amaru Revolutionary Movement took over the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Peru during a similar reception and created a hostage crisis of more than a month's duration.

**GULF STATE EVENT:** Bahraini Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Bin Seif Jaber Al Mussalam also hosted a reception to mark his country's national day. The reception was held at the Regency Palace Hotel on Tuesday evening and attended by several senior government officials, members of the diplomatic corps and business sector representatives.

**POT SHOTS:** Al Sabeel newspaper, unofficially the mouthpiece of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement, took some jabs at Jordan's Communist Party for holding an international conference in Amman. In a column by Dr. Abdul Hamid Mustafa Sabbagh, the writer asked why Jordan's Communist Party was continuing to hold on to the last vestiges of the organisation when with the fall of communism in the former Soviet Union, European communists have taken to other parties and affiliations. Dr. Sabbagh, citing examples, ended by asking yet another question: would parties in Jordan begin to reform themselves and present new platforms? In his Speech From The Throne His Majesty King Hussein told the members of new 13th Parliament that the government would introduce legislation aimed at developing political parties and professional unions laws in order to guarantee better performance, regulate practices and protect the rights of the people and the interests of the nation.

**ACCORDING TO LAW:** The administration of the Islamic Hospital in Amman has appointed Homam Sneed as legal counsellor for the hospital. The principals of this health care facility believed that they needed legal guidance in providing services to patients in accordance with Islamic tenets. For example, health care staff are divided such that women nurses attend only to women patients, and men nurses to men patients. Mr. Sneed, a professor of Sharia, is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement and was a Lower House Deputy in the 12th Parliament representing Amman. He was a strong advocate of boycotting the November 4 elections.

**REMEMBER TO BRAKE:** The Islamic Bank has launched the first drive-in automated teller machine facility at the Rawda Housing Complex off the University Road. Clients who drive (and hopefully are legally licensed to) can now drive up and do their banking without getting out of their cars, provided they drive up close enough to the machine, are not driving a semi or are blessed with extraordinarily long arms.

**GERMAN TRADE FAIRS:** Industrialists and manufacturers may do well to contact Marita Riedel, the representative of the German-Arab Chamber of Commerce in Jordan. Ms. Riedel is

hosting a Christmas tea at the InterContinental Hotel on Sunday, Dec. 21, where a presentation will be made of what German fairs in general, as well as the under construction Munich fairgrounds offer as milieus for international trade fairs. The event will also include a film about Munich and the new fairgrounds due to open in February 1998. The Amman office of the German-Arab Chamber of Commerce opened only last year. Previously the chamber's large Cairo office handled work involving several countries in the region. Ms. Riedel was assigned from the Cairo office to take charge of the new official representation of the chamber in Amman.

**A RUGBY UNION:** The 18-month-old Jordanian Rugby Football Club returned from participating in the Dubai International Rugby Seven-a-Side Tournament last weekend with the runner-up trophy in the Affiliated Competition. In February, the club, sponsored by the British Bank of the Middle East and the Forte Grand Hotel, will host a competition in Amman. It has invited teams from Egypt, Lebanon and Cyprus to take part in a celebratory event to inaugurate the new grounds at Al Hussein Sports City which the Royal Jordanian Polo Club offered to the team in a show of sportsmanship. The rugby club has built up a large membership of Jordanian and expatriate players and is now captained by Farah Nusheiwat and coached by Mike Sedman of the defence section of the British embassy.

**COMIN' RIGHT UP:** The Arabian Hospitality Company's six partners, Leith Bihaji, Ghaleb Hinnoudeh, Fakhri Hazineh, Khalil Kasef, Shafiq Zawaidah, and their partner company, Jordan Tower Company for Tourism Investment, owned by Ahmad Khourma, have opened a two storey eatery designed to offer patrons a choice "decem fast faod" for those on the run and dining à la steak house for others with more time. The establishment is called Philadelphia Corner and is located near the new Grindlays Bank in Shmeisani. The concept was to blend the best of the U.S.'s original capital with the best of the ancient Philadelphia (Amman). The first floor unit offers delicatessen food — cold cut sandwiches and the like, made before your very eyes — and the upper floor steak house also houses an open kitchen where you can watch the chef grill your choice of steak to your liking. The proprietors import their beef from the U.S. and their cold cuts from Europe. The first target clientele is from Amman's "wall street" area Shmeisani. On Thursdays and Fridays Philadelphia Corner offers American breakfasts in the deli; lunch and dinner are served daily at both sites.

**THAT'S A BIG STAMP:** For those of you sending out holiday greeting cards, the Postal Department has just issued another commemorative stamp. This one honours the National Football Team which this year won the gold medal in the 8th Pan-Arab Games played in Beirut this summer. The team beat Syria 1-0. The large stamp is illustrated with two photos: one showing Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor receiving the Jordanian sports delegation upon their return from Beirut, and the other shows the Jordanian team parading through the streets of Amman after their victory.

Jennifer Hamarneh

## Café de Paris

## Christmas Selection

## NATIVITY STOLLEN:

Butter cake with raisins, candied lemon, candied orange & marzipan.

## CHRISTMAS LOG:

Butter cream cake flavoured with chocolate & hazelnuts.

## HONEY CAKE

## CINNAMON CAKE

## WHITE FOREST CAKE

## CHRISTMAS COOKIES

## SANTA'S FAVOURITE:

Almond cake with candied fruits & oriental spices.

## CHOCOLATE SANTA CLAUSE

## Other Specialties

## OPERA CAKE

## PINK GRAPEFRUIT CREAM CAKE

## WALNUT SPICY CAKE

## CREAM CHEESE CAKE

## CHRISTMAS MORNING COFFEE

## CHRISTMAS HIGH TEA

Including pastries, stollen, chocolate, finger sandwiches and freshly brewed coffee (From 18 to 25 December, 10am-6pm daily)

## CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

The ideal gift for your friends, business associates or family. A Hamper full of Café de Paris delicacies.

## OR:

Create your own version of the Café de Paris Christmas Hamper by selecting the goodies yourself. PRICE ACCORDING TO SELECTION.

Also available, cakes for every other special occasion.

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## Smuggling forces phosphate company to hike price of fertiliser by 70 per cent

By Mahmoud Masharqa  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN—The Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) Wednesday announced an increase in the price of diammonium phosphate fertiliser by 70 per cent. As such, the selling price goes up to JD 170 a tonne in bags and JD 160 in bulk at the Aqaba Industrial Complex.

JPMC General Manager Samah Madani said the decision was taken after it has been discovered that some traders have been taking advantage of the company's subsidies for fertilisers, offered to the local farmers, by smuggling huge amounts to neighbouring countries.

By selling the fertilisers at higher prices, the smuggling has prevented the Jordanian farmers of buying their needs of fertilisers at the subsidised price, Mr. Madani added.

"We have been subsidising the fertilisers sold to the local farmers by selling them the product at JD 70 per tonne but by taking this measure now, we hope to put an end to manipulation acts by greedy merchants who have been exploiting the company and the farmers alike," the general manager emphasised.

He noted that the company will now examine ways for providing the local farmers with subsidised fertiliser in conjunction with the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the

Ministry of Agriculture. Agriculture Minister Mijhem Khreisha, for his part, voiced objection to the hiking of fertiliser prices or any other agricultural inputs.

He said that the Ministry of Agriculture would urge the JPMC to rescind its decision or at least reduce the new tariff in a manner that would not leave adverse effects on farming.

The JPMC's decision was criticised also by Salamah Hiyari, chairman of the Agricultural Committee at the Lower House of Parliament.

"Prices of this commodity, which is vital for agriculture, should not be increased and hiking of prices in such manner would not put an end to

smuggling," said Mr. Hiyari.

He added that the decision is bound to harm farmers but would not stop the smuggling which should be dealt with in other methods. Mr. Hiyari said he would submit this issue to the House and will follow up with the Ministry of Agriculture and the JPMC.

For their part, farmers have already expressed dismay over this decision noting that the decision would increase the cost of production and, subsequently, the consumers will have to bear the brunt.

They said that by increasing the price of agricultural products, Jordan will be losing the competitive edge in foreign markets.

### AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDANIAN  
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179  
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 17/12/1997

| PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH  | COMPANY'S NAME | F / E                   | DIV. | NO. OF TRANS. | NO. OF SHARES | VALUE TRADED JD | OPEN PRICE | CLOSE PRICE | CHANGE |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| 346,000  | 249,000        | ARAB BANK               | 15.2 | 1.21          | 7             | 620             | 204600     | 321.00      | 1.00   |
| 2,340  | 1,680          | JOR. NATIONAL BK.       | E    | 0.00          | 15            | 8050            | 14714      | 1.83        | 0.01   |
| 3,600  | 1,800          | BANK OF JORDAN          | E    | 0.00          | 38            | 54820           | 101716     | 1.80        | 0.09   |
| 2,680  | 1,730          | INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.     | 10.6 | 5.93          | 20            | 22350           | 38433      | 1.77        | 0.01   |
| 5,200  | 4,600          | THE HOUSING BK.         | 15.5 | 3.75          | 15            | 9200            | 47569      | 5.12        | 0.06   |
| 5,990  | 710            | JOR. GULF BANK          | 4.2  | 9.86          | 8             | 7000            | 4970       | 7.21        | 0.01   |
| 4,190  | 2,920          | ARAB JOR. BK.           | 22.1 | 0.00          | 3             | 30000           | 67900      | 2.93        | 0.01   |
| 4,050  | 2,380          | JOR. ISLAMIC BANK       | 12.4 | 1.93          | 13            | 3450            | 4386       | 2.39        | 0.04   |
| 1,520  | 1,110          | UNION BK. SAV. INV.     | P    | 0.00          | 1             | 750             | 625        | 1.11        | 0.01   |
| 1,840  | 870            | BELT AL-HIL (BETRA)     | E    | 0.00          | 1             | 100             | 88         | 0.67        | 0.01   |
| 4,990  | 2,500          | ARAB BANKING CO.        | 19.9 | 0.00          | 6             | 3171            | 6613       | 2.77        | 0.02   |
| BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 235.78 %CHG: -0.06 126 139556 518932       |                |                         |      |               |               |                 |            |             |        |
| 2,350  | 1,820          | ARAB LIFE INSUR.        | 8.6  | 4.55          | 2             | 931             | 1860       | 2.00        | 0.00   |
| INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 118.31 %CHG: 0.00 2 931 1660          |                |                         |      |               |               |                 |            |             |        |
| 2,050  | 1,550          | JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.      | 9.4  | 5.13          | 13            | 7400            | 14429      | 1.95        | 0.01   |
| 6,100  | 3,550          | ARAB INTL. HOTELS       | 11.4 | 5.41          | 12            | 750             | 2775       | 3.65        | 0.05   |
| 1,550  | 930            | NATL. PORTFOLIO         | 15.2 | 3.08          | 5             | 650             | 6043       | 1.06        | 0.03   |
| 810  | 470            | JORDAN INTL. TRAD.      | 29.3 | 0.00          | 20            | 12300           | 6916       | 0.54        | 0.03   |
| 8,900  | 6,700          | ALRAI                   | 14.9 | 6.00          | 4             | 350             | 2920       | 8.20        | 0.04   |
| 1,680  | 1,150          | JOR. EAST HOTELS        | 16.4 | 0.00          | 1             | 500             | 1310       | 1.04        | 0.01   |
| 3,900  | 2,890          | ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.   | 10.1 | 0.00          | 9             | 4450            | 17143      | 3.86        | 0.34   |
| 1,050  | 740            | JORDAN EXPR. INV.       | 9    | 0.00          | 1             | 5000            | 4750       | 0.95        | 0.01   |
| 1,090  | 740            | FAREH EDUCATION         | 9    | 0.00          | 1             | 500             | 1020       | 0.95        | 0.01   |
| 2,230  | 1,630          | UNIFIED CO.             | 7.9  | 6.59          | 1             | 500             | 825        | 1.66        | 0.01   |
| SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 108.70 %CHG: +0.29 68 36860 56544       |                |                         |      |               |               |                 |            |             |        |
| 1,150  | 930            | ATANKOR                 | 9    | 0.00          | 1             | 300             | 345        | 1.15        | 0.01   |
| 4,450  | 3,000          | JOR. CEMENT FACT.       | 20.2 | 3.67          | 13            | 3115            | 9331       | 3.00        | 0.00   |
| 7,050  | 5,570          | ARAB PORTS CO.          | 15.2 | 3.08          | 5             | 265             | 1826       | 3.00        | 0.00   |
| 11,160   | 9,200          | JOR. PETROL. REFINERY   | 10.0 | 8.59          | 5             | 580             | 5693       | 10.35       | 0.35   |
| 6,700  | 4,500          | JORDAN TANNING          | 7.2  | 5.13          | 1             | 100             | 585        | 5.95        | 0.05   |
| 1,410  | 1,040          | MOULIN INDUSTRIES       | 9.0  | 9.62          | 10            | 1250            | 1310       | 1.04        | 0.01   |
| 3,260  | 1,730          | INDUSTRIAL CONGR.       | 9    | 0.00          | 6             | 812             | 1163       | 1.40        | 0.07   |
| 4,700  | 3,440          | ARAB PHARM. MANF.       | 11.5 | 4.78          | 30            | 8350            | 34868      | 4.12        | 0.16   |
| 7,250  | 4,400          | JOR. CHEMICAL IND.      | 4.8  | 4.30          | 1             | 50000           | 22500      | 4.60        | 0.05   |
| 1,670  | 1,020          | JOR. PIPES MANF.        | 16.6 | 5.97          | 7             | 9100            | 1260       | 1.36        | 0.02   |
| 2,800  | 1,860          | GENERAL MINING          | 9    | 0.00          | 3             | 350             | 655        | 1.86        | 0.00   |
| 8,400  | 5,000          | ARAB CHEM. DISTRB.      | 20.5 | 4.48          | 1             | 100             | 670        | 6.90        | 0.20   |
| 6,000  | 4,400          | ORAL PHARM. CHEM.       | 14.0 | 4.38          | 12            | 24800           | 138756     | 5.97        | 0.71   |
| 3,850  | 2,220          | ARAB ALUM. IND.         | 6.0  | 9.80          | 24            | 8100            | 20231      | 2.42        | 0.12   |
| 670  | 450            | LIVESTOCK & POULTRY     | 9.5  | 0.00          | 5             | 3000            | 1350       | 0.45        | 0.01   |
| 770  | 450            | NATIONAL INDUS.         | 9    | 0.00          | 10            | 10000           | 5000       | 0.45        | 0.01   |
| 1,190  | 630            | INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.  | 9    | 0.00          | 18            | 9300            | 2972       | 0.41        | 0.02   |
| 920  | 530            | JOR. ROCKWOOL INDUS.    | 9    | 0.00          | 11            | 3450            | 2005       | 0.56        | 0.02   |
| 2,970  | 1,000          | UNIV. CHEM. INDUS.      | 13.1 | 6.90          | 10            | 1150            | 1612       | 1.40        | 0.05   |
| 4,610  | 2,700          | ALADDIN CO.             | 22.5 | 2.86          | 2             | 650             | 1820       | 2.70        | 0.10   |
| 3,000  | 1,160          | NATL. CARBON WTR. MFAC  | 29.9 | 0.00          | 14            | 5900            | 7295       | 1.20        | 0.04   |
| 890  | 530            | JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.      | 9    | 0.00          | 3             | 950             | 575        | 0.60        | 0.01   |
| 1,610  | 1,460          | ORAL PHARM. CHEM.       | 16.8 | 5.65          | 2             | 2500            | 1749       | 1.29        | 0.05   |
| 1,190  | 600            | KANTHER INVEST.         | 58.1 | 0.00          | 1             | 100             | 59         | 0.62        | 0.01   |
| 1,840  | 820            | UNIV. HOOD INDUS.       | 9    | 0.00          | 36            | 35610           | 31689      | 0.88        | 0.02   |
| 1,410  | 930            | JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES   | 9.5  | 14.06         | 19            | 13960           | 9801       | 0.71        | 0.01   |
| 1,040  | 810            | JOR. HEM CABLE CO.      | 16.5 | 0.00          | 5             | 1950            | 1749       | 0.90        | 0.01   |
| 1,970  | 1,340          | EL-ZAY READY WEAR       | 48.9 | 0.00          | 1             | 400             | 556        | 1.39        | 0.01   |
| 1,330  | 1,080          | INTL. TOBACCO           | 6.6  | 0.00          | 1             | 5000            | 6050       | 1.22        | 0.01   |
| 1,200  | 860            | UNION CH. & YRG.        | 47.3 | 0.00          | 3             | 250             | 2306       | 1.30        | 0.01   |
| 810  | 710            | JORDAN STEEL            | 33.5 | 6.76          | 6             | 3050            | 2257       | 0.74        | 0.01   |
| 840  | 570            | HIO. EAST COMPLEX       | 7.4  | 16.67         | 19            | 48950           | 29670      | 0.60        | 0.01   |
| INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 115.09 %CHG: +0.28 277 343198 618262 |                |                         |      |               |               |                 |            |             |        |
| GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 169.72 %CHG: +0.00 475 522545 1197617             |                |                         |      |               |               |                 |            |             |        |
| PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 17/12/1997            |                |                         |      |               |               |                 |            |             |        |
| 610  | 340            | JOR. TRADE FNC.         | 9.3  | 0.00          | 27            | 76950           | 27147      | 0.36        | 0.01   |
| 1,550  | 1,060          | ZARA FOR INVESTMENT     | 77.4 | 0.00          | 33            | 300000          | 354000     | 1.26        | 0.16   |
| 800  | 660            | JORDAN INV. SOF         | 9    | 0.00          | 14            | 45044           | 9446       | 0.71        | 0.01   |
| 570  | 360            | ARAB FIN. INVEST.       | 9    | 0.00          | 30            | 91400           | 42442      | 0.45        | 0.01   |
| 1,000  | 720            | AL-SHARQ INV. CO.       | 9    | 0.00          | 6             | 19015           | 13962      | 0.94        | 0.01   |
| 780  | 610            | AL-DHILLYAH 751         | 66.2 | 0.00          | 5             | 3004            | 1340       | 0.69        | 0.01   |
| 670  | 440            | ARAB FOOD & MED.        | 9    | 0.00          | 3             | 900             | 441        | 0.49        | 0.01   |
| 530  | 380            | ARAB TRVL. INV. TRD.    | 34.6 | 0.00          | 3             | 250             | 2306       | 1.30        | 0.01   |
| 750  | 380            | NATL. MULT. ENG. MANICO | 9    | 0.00          | 57            | 130900          | 64026      | 0.47        | 0.02   |
| 660  | 580            | MIDEAST PHARM. 751      | 8    | 0.00          | 5             | 7250            | 2678       | 0.64        | 0.01   |

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) Your life is full of matters that need close attention right now. For starters, what about all the lists you've got: places you need to be, things you need to buy, stuff that needs to be handled? And that's just your private life. Begin by getting organized. You'll be glad you took the time.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) You and your sweetheart may have a problem getting together during the middle of the day. Not to worry. Tonight looks fine for romance. Tomorrow night and Sunday morning look even better. You need to make time for each other. This is supposed to be the season of joy, remembrance.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 21) All sorts of changes are going on. Are you redecorating? It looks like you could be replacing the furniture or, heaven forbid, shampooing the rug. Maybe it's nothing more than picking up the Christmas ornaments you left all over the floor while putting up the tree. Make it into a game.

**CANCER** (June 22 to July 21) This is an easier day for you. It's all finally starting to make sense! There'll be a couple of surprises during the middle of the day, but you'll handle them easily. Stay off the caffeine. You need all the tranquility you can get.

**LEO** (July 22 to August 21) There might be disruption concerning money and romance. Maybe there isn't enough money to make the impression you'd like. Don't let this upset you. Give generous helpings of love and your gifts will be luxurious, no matter how much they cost. That's the important part, anyway.

**VIRGO** (August 22 to September 22) It's a fun time of year, but your health is in an uproar. Not to worry. In the next few days, you'll find that everything mellows out. You try to do everything perfectly, but don't stress out about it. It will be perfect. Trust yourself on that.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) Something has to be done precisely, and quickly. You've been goofing off instead of taking care of business. Now you're down to the wire. Make a list and check things off. Stay organized and effective. It's worth the effort.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) This would be a good day to clean out your closet. Your cast-off clothing, blankets and other household items are desperately needed by somebody else. You'll be making more room for yourself and doing a good deed at the same time. And your efforts and material goods will be greatly appreciated.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) A pernickety older person is on your case today. He or she wants the job done perfectly, and no excuses. You don't have to let it throw you into a tizzy. Why don't you try complying for a change? This could make a big difference in the size of your income next year.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 20) You have a noticeable case of wanderlust. You're also getting tired of being in the same old rut. You're anxious to get out and try something new. Hold off until afternoon. An unexpected development during the middle of the day could cause complications. Once that's handled, the coast is clear.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21 to February 19) You'll get a lot further today if you pool your money with somebody else. Neither of you have enough to do what you want by yourself. There may be some obstacles, especially around the middle of the day. Don't be stopped. Allow them to inspire you instead.

**PISCES** (February 20 to March 20) A partner has some good advice. In fact, he or she is in a position to make one of your dreams come true. So listen with respect and do what's suggested. You're very good at doing what's required, often before it's asked. You have an uncanny sixth sense when it comes to that.

## Christmas & New Year

"Our Yearly Sale On Now."

**DAJANI** Jewellers

Amra Forum Hotel Shops, Amman.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1997

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

### ARIES

(March 21 to April 19) Your team is red hot tonight and tomorrow, so plan accordingly. If there's a charitable group you're thinking of getting involved with, go for it. Romance could develop in a group setting. If you're already in a committed relationship, work on it together. It'll not only be bonding, but also lots of fun.

### TAURUS

(April 20 to May 20) Your major expenses today are on items for the home. You're trying to fix the place up for the holidays. You might also be trying to impress an older person. This is somebody who's fairly demanding, so you could be a little nervous. Not to worry. You're a very creative person, and if you do the best you can, you'll be fine.

### GEMINI

(May 21 to June 21) Your mind is just voracious. You have zillions of questions, and the confidence to ask them. You'll be going up to total strangers and asking them all sorts of interesting things — and they'll be answering! If you use discretion, you'll get valuable information. Don't waste it on idle gossip.

### CANCER

(June 22 to July 21) Money is coming into your account today. And it looks like you're getting things checked off your list. You'll notice it's easier to study financial matters. For example, if you want to learn a new financial software programme, launch into that tomorrow.

### LEO

(July 22 to August 21) Conditions are so easy, you might be tempted just to go with the flow. Instead, give yourself a push in the right direction. You know what needs to be done. If there's any more homework, that will be easy, too. Don't be stopped simply because you don't know how to proceed. Get help from an expert.

### VIRGO

(August 22 to September 22) It looks like you're going to have to click right along today to get everything done on time. If you keep at it, you might even finish ahead of schedule. That would be wonderful. Talk your sweetheart into helping you and you'll have even more fun. That's especially true this evening.

### LIBRA

(September 23 to October 22) You and your friends will find all sorts of reasons to celebrate, and you should. You've accomplished a lot over the last year. You may even be able to get a lot done today. It won't take you long if you're all working together.

### SCORPIO

(October 23 to November 21) Your boss is in a good mood. If there's something you want, this would be the time to ask a raise? A holiday bonus? Why not? All you have to do is let that person feel like he or she is in control. Just for a little while. Oh, e' mon! It won't hurt.

### SAGITTARIUS

(November 22 to December 21) You're definitely in the mood to travel. And you want to take along somebody who's fun, exciting and maybe athletic as well. This would be a fabulous day to go skiing, for example. If you get more friends to go, they could help with the expenses. Not a bad idea.

### CAPRICORN

(December 22 to January 20) You and a dear friend need to pool resources. If you go in on a big purchase together, you'll both come out winners. This is going to require a certain amount of trust, so choose your partner wisely.

### AQUARIUS

(January 21 to February 19) You're enthusiastic, confident and driven to succeed. Don't let material values get in the way of spiritual ones. Keep spiritual channels uncluttered so the energy flows smoothly. It'll still be a challenge today, but you're sure getting better at it. Keep practicing.

### PISCES

(February 20 to March 20) There's plenty of work to do. There's also money coming into your account, so no point in complaining. Instead, think of all the wonderful things you're going to be able to buy. If you're like most Pisceans, you live for buying presents. And this is the time of year for it!

Birthingstone of December: Turquoise — Zircon

## THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Deep blue color
- Capacity of a hard drive
- Common reef residents
- 12/24 or 12/31
- Parting to similarity
- 100 yrs.
- As written
- RR stop
- d'oeuvres
- Short jump
- For example
- Mountain division
- Bad to the bone
- Assorted distances
- "Nam"
- Slanton film
- Tub hangers
- Sportscaster
- Cross
- Sandwich cookies
- Picture in one's mind
- MacLaine movie, "la Douce"
- Javelin's path
- Row and Sarton
- Fed. agents
- Strengtheners
- Dispatched
- Machine-shop machine
- Bit of butter
- Drunk-tank letters
- Spumante
- Le-le lead-in
- Gutworms
- lobby
- Hwy. sign
- Native American ceremonies
- Northern European lang.
- Experts
- McMahon and McBain
- Booker T. & the MG's hit of 1962

DOWN

- Trojan of sports
- "You Make Me Feel Like Dancing" singer
- Tappan top
- Knocks lightly
- Ornate Nin
- Commercial
- Grp. of doctors



## Daily Business Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Women wonder why gold prices remain high in the local market

**\*\* THE LOCAL** market does not seem to be affected by the decline in international prices," said Um Hamed as she was walking in the jewellery market. Wondering why gold prices remain high, she indicated that jewellers try to maintain their profit margin as in the past. According to Um Hamed, who refused to give her full name, merchants will not lower prices even if international prices decline further.

Hamideh Abdul Rahman, another shopper, stressed her desire to buy some jewellery because her son is about to marry. "The person in need has no choice but to buy at any price and has to bear the greed of the merchants," she said.

Another shopper, Fatima Jamil, said prices are undoubtedly high and she went on to accuse merchants of raising craftsmanship costs to keep the gold prices high at the local market despite the low prices on international markets. "Some merchants hide the gold ounces and gold liras which are in high demand because they carry minimal craftsmanship cost," she added.

Local goldsmith wonder why people believe that prices were not affected by the international drop in prices. "Prices have actually dropped by varying large percentages during a short period," the goldsmiths assert, stressing at the same time that the market is in a recession not witnessed since a long time. Emphasising that craftsmanship costs are nearly fixed, although the cost varies according to the type of the jewellery, the merchants attribute the weakness in the market to people preferring to watch

## Export and Finance Bank leads in cutting prime interest rate

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

**AMMAN**— The Export and Finance Bank (EFB) has decided to lower its interest rate and as such, is leading other banks towards reducing interest rates, the bank's chairman said Wednesday.

"That should reflect positively on the investment environment in the country," said Ali Housari, EFB board chairman, noting that the decrease of rates on certificates of deposits and the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) reduction of the discount rate, has prompted the decision to lower its prime rate by 0.75 per cent.

The present interest rate ranges between 14 and 15 per cent, Mr. Housari said. "The decision aims at increasing investments in the country, encouraging national exports and extending finance to industries," Mr. Housari told to the Jordan Times.

"This is a very important step that might trigger a similar step by other financial institutions," the EFB chairman said. Mr. Housari said lower interest rates would "directly" affect trading at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) which, in turn, would revive the stock

market's activities. He emphasised it will improve Jordanian companies' profitability as well. Last year, the CBJ influenced higher interest rates which led to liquidity problem in the market and negatively affected the AFM activities.

Many investors criticised the CBJ at the time and called for a review for its indirect pressure in order to bring the stock market's activities back to normal.

An EFB statement said the security market should be prompted to take the major responsibility for providing long-term finance.

The EFB, which provides comprehensive banking services, including the provision of direct and indirect facilities, is committed to play a major role in contributing to the development financial market.

## REUTERS • REUTERS • The Business of Information

| Major Currencies & Cross Rates |        |        |        |         |         |        |         |         |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| Currency                       | USD    | DEM    | GBP    | CHF     | JPY     | CAD    | FRF     | ITL     | ESP    |
| US Dollar                      | 1.0000 | 1.7710 | 0.6061 | 1.4360  | 126.33  | 1.4220 | 1736.00 | 1.9365  | 6.9280 |
| DE Mark                        | 0.5647 | 1.0000 | 0.3417 | 0.8085  | 71.67   | 0.8020 | 978.41  | 1.1289  | 3.2468 |
| GB Sterling                    | 1.6500 | 2.8226 | 1.0000 | 2.3860  | 209.42  | 2.3463 | 2864.67 | 3.2944  | 9.7818 |
| CH Franc                       | 0.6959 | 1.2343 | 0.4219 | 1.0000  | 96.44   | 0.8903 | 1208.59 | 1.3939  | 4.1313 |
| JP Yen                         | 0.0079 | 1.3848 | 0.4768 | 1.1297  | 1.0000  | 1.1194 | 13.67   | 167.25  | 4.6702 |
| CA Dollar                      | 0.7032 | 1.2811 | 0.4265 | 1.0118  | 1.12    | 1.0000 | 1226.85 | 1.4092  | 4.1867 |
| IT Lira                        | 0.0006 | 1.0193 | 0.3484 | 0.0825  | 1370.51 | 0.8177 | 11.49   | 1.0000  | 3.4114 |
| NL Guilder                     | 0.0008 | 0.8869 | 0.3032 | 0.7183  | 63.50   | 0.7115 | 888.11  | 1.0000  | 2.9683 |
| FR Franc                       | 0.1687 | 0.2886 | 0.1021 | 24.1786 | 21.37   | 0.2399 | 33.66   | 33.6600 | 1.0000 |

| Middle Eastern Currencies |        |        |         |        |        |        |        |         |        |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Currency                  | USD    | JOD    | SAR     | BAH    | QAT    | KUW    | AED    | LB      | EGP    |
| US Dollar                 | 1.0000 | 0.7090 | 3.7500  | 0.3770 | 3.6410 | 0.3046 | 3.6723 | 1522.00 | 3.3850 |
| Jordan Dinar              | 1.4104 | 1.0000 | 5.2891  | 0.5317 | 5.1354 | 0.4298 | 5.1795 | 2148.10 | 4.7886 |
| Saudi Riyal               | 0.2687 | 0.1831 | 1.0000  | 0.1005 | 0.97   | 0.0812 | 0.88   | 406.13  | 0.9053 |
| Bahraini Dinar            | 2.65   | 1.8806 | 9.9467  | 1.0000 | 9.86   | 0.8079 | 9.74   | 4038.68 | 8.0051 |
| Qatar Dinar               | 0.2746 | 0.1947 | 1.0299  | 1.0299 | 1.0000 | 0.0836 | 1.01   | 418.29  | 0.8324 |
| Kuwait Dinar              | 3.2935 | 2.3280 | 12.3132 | 1.2378 | 11.96  | 1.0000 | 12.05  | 5000.82 | 0.9324 |
| Emirate Dinar             | 0.2723 | 0.1931 | 1.0212  | 1.0212 | 0.9815 | 0.0829 | 1.00   | 414.73  | 0.8245 |
| Lebanese 1000             | 0.86   | 0.4865 | 2.4622  | 0.2475 | 2.3907 | 0.2000 | 2.4112 | 1.0000  | 2.2292 |
| Egyptian                  | 0.2846 | 0.2088 | 1.1046  | 0.1110 | 1.0725 | 0.0897 | 1.0817 | 448.60  | 1.0000 |

| JOD Cross Rates |        |        |           |        | Mid-East Currencies |         |         |         |  |
|-----------------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| Currency        | Buy    | Sell   | Currency  | USD    | DEM                 | GBP     | CHF     | JPY     |  |
| US Dollar       | 0.708  | 0.710  | SA Riyal  | 0.2687 | 0.4726              | 0.16162 | 0.38294 | 33.8742 |  |
| GB Sterling     | 1.1699 | 1.1657 | AE Dirham | 0.2723 | 0.48263             | 0.16504 | 0.39104 | 34.8913 |  |
| DE Mark         | 0.3987 | 0.4007 | KW Dinar  | 3.2935 | 5.81734             | 1.99006 | 4.71478 | 417.188 |  |
| CH Franc        | 0.4927 | 0.4952 | BH Dinar  | 0.3770 | 4.69925             | 1.60746 | 3.80952 | 336.927 |  |
| FR Franc        | 0.1191 | 0.1197 | CY Pound  | 1.8162 | 3.3929              | 1.1598  | 2.7469  | 242.989 |  |
| JP Yen          | 0.6649 | 0.6677 |           |        |                     |         |         |         |  |
| NL Guilder      | 0.3539 | 0.3557 |           |        |                     |         |         |         |  |
| IT Lira         | 0.407  | 0.409  |           |        |                     |         |         |         |  |

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

## Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) New Exchange at Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA)

JTC announces that at midnight of Dec. 19, 1997 a new Exchange will be under service for the customers at Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) and will replace the existing exchange. Due to that, all existing working telephone lines will be transferred to the new exchange where their numbers will be changed into (7) seven digits as follows:

- Add (44) to the left of all the existing telephone numbers except those fall in the range 53368 to 53999 which will be as in the table below.
- The new exchange will be considered as one of Amman exchanges. Therefore, calls from & to the Airport within Amman Governorate will be considered as local calls.
- The area code of this exchange will be (06)

**Note:**

- The directory information is 121
- The new exchange telephone number is 4451111

Director General  
Ma'moun Balqas

| No | Old No. | New No. | No | Old No. | New No. | No | Old No. | New No. |
|----|---------|---------|----|---------|---------|----|---------|---------|
| 1  | 53368   | 4451768 | 34 | 53401   | 4451701 | 67 | 53433   | 4451524 |
| 2  | 53369   | 4451769 | 35 | 53402   | 4451702 | 68 | 53662   | 4451862 |
| 3  | 53370   | 4451770 | 36 | 53403   | 4451703 | 69 | 53683   | 4451863 |
| 4  | 53371   | 4451771 | 37 | 53404   | 4451704 | 70 | 53664   | 4451864 |
| 5  | 53372   | 4451772 | 38 | 53405   | 4451705 | 71 | 53665   | 4451865 |
| 6  | 53373   | 4451773 | 39 | 53434   | 4451534 | 72 | 53666   | 4451866 |
| 7  | 53374   | 4451774 | 40 | 53435   | 4451535 | 73 | 53667   | 4451867 |
| 8  | 53375   | 4451775 | 41 | 53436   | 4451536 | 74 | 53668   | 4451868 |
| 9  | 53376   | 4451776 | 42 | 53437   | 4451537 | 75 | 53671   | 4451871 |
| 10 | 53377   | 4451777 | 43 | 53438   | 4451538 | 76 | 53672   | 4451872 |
| 11 | 53378   | 4451778 | 44 | 53444   | 4451444 | 77 | 53673   | 4451873 |
| 12 | 53379   | 4451779 | 45 | 53445   | 4451545 | 78 | 53674   | 4451874 |
| 13 | 53380   | 4451780 | 46 | 53447   | 4451547 | 79 | 53677   | 4451875 |
| 14 | 53381   | 4451781 | 47 | 53448   | 4451548 | 80 | 53722   | 4451730 |
| 15 | 53382   | 4451782 | 48 | 53449   | 4451149 | 81 | 53723   | 4451731 |
| 16 | 53383   | 4451783 | 49 | 53457   | 4451857 | 82 | 53733   | 4451733 |
| 17 | 53384   | 4451784 | 50 | 53458   | 4451858 | 83 | 53734   | 4451734 |
| 18 | 53385   | 4451785 | 51 | 53499   | 4451870 | 84 | 53750   | 4451740 |
| 19 | 53386   | 4451786 | 52 | 53535   | 4451735 | 85 | 53767   | 4451767 |
| 20 | 53387   | 4451787 | 53 | 53536   | 4451736 | 86 | 53777   | 4451766 |
| 21 | 53388   | 4451788 | 54 | 53556   | 4451756 | 87 | 53883   | 4451983 |
| 22 | 53389   | 4451789 | 55 | 53800   | 4451800 | 88 | 53884   | 4451984 |
| 23 | 53390   | 4451390 | 56 | 53601   | 4451801 | 89 | 53888   | 4451880 |
| 24 | 53391   | 4451991 | 57 | 53602   | 4451802 | 90 | 53889   | 4451988 |
| 25 | 53392   | 4451992 | 58 | 53603   | 4451803 | 91 | 53900   | 4451826 |
| 26 | 53393   | 4451993 | 59 | 53605   | 4451805 | 92 | 53901   | 4451603 |
| 27 | 53394   | 4451694 | 60 | 53606   | 4451806 | 93 | 53933   | 4451933 |
| 28 | 53395   | 4451695 | 61 | 53611   | 4451811 | 94 | 53934   | 4451954 |
| 29 | 53396   | 4451696 | 62 | 53612   | 4451812 | 95 | 53939   | 4451939 |
| 30 | 53397   | 4451795 | 63 | 53622   | 4451722 | 96 | 53940   | 4451940 |
| 31 | 53398   | 4451798 | 64 | 53623   | 4451723 | 97 | 53941   | 4451931 |
| 32 | 53399   | 4451599 | 65 | 53650   | 4451850 | 98 | 53999   | 4451990 |
| 33 | 53400   | 4451544 | 66 | 53651   | 4451851 | 99 | 53668   | 4451868 |

## Fiat expects to double operating profits

**TURIN, Italy (AFP)**— The engineering group Fiat expects to double operating profits this year to 3,600 billion lire (\$2.0 billion) from 1,805 billion lire last year, a senior executive has said.

The manager, Carlo Gatto, responsible for management development, also told a meeting of 500 senior managers in the firm that sales would increase by 15.0 per cent to close to 90,000 billion lire (\$53.0 billion).

Sales by Fiat Auto would rise by 17.0 per cent and by Toro Assicurazioni by 20.0 per cent, and these two divisions would show the strongest growth, he said.

Investment this year would amount to about 5,000 billion lire.

In 1998 the group would launch a Fiat 600 model, the Alfa 166 and the Multipla. The Marea would follow the Palio to become a so-called world car and the Bravo and Brava would be redesigned.

Senior executive Roberto Testore said that 45,000 customers had placed orders for the new Alfa 156 and sales would total 120,000 to 130,000 units. This demonstrated that the Alfa name was recovering, he said.

Another top executive Giancarlo Boschetti said that in the industrial vehicle sector, Iveco expected to maintain its share of the market even though demand was flat.

## Jerusalem Express Travel

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|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
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| Cairo<br>29/12-2/1           | MARRIOTT<br>MERIDIEN<br>GOLDEN TULIP | JD 329<br>JD 299<br>JD 255 |
| Cairo<br>26/12-2/1           | SEMIAMIS<br>INTER-CONTINENTAL        | JD 399                     |
| Luxor<br>4 days              | SONESTA                              | JD 239                     |
| Beirut<br>31/12-2/1          | 4-star hotel<br>with tours           | JD 249                     |
| Larnaca<br>31/12-2/1         | 5-star hotel<br>with New Year Party  | JD 235                     |
| Tunis & Sousa<br>31/12-7/1   | 5-star hotels                        | JD 599                     |

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## Al Salt lead handball league

By Roufan Nahhas  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The second leg of Handball's First Division Championship resumed this week after taking a break during the 2nd Arab Champions Cup which was held in Amman Dec. 3-13 with Al Salt and Al Arabi's participation.

As players returned to action, Al Salt took the lead with 23 points after a 34-25 (15-7) win over Amman, followed by Al Ahli in second place with 21 points.

Yarmouk Al Shouneh went down and settled at the bottom of the standings after a 27-24 (12-10) loss to Umm Jozeh.

Al Salt 34 Amman 25: Al Salt who finished sixth in the Arab Champions Cup returned to their league matches full of confidence to meet sixth

| STANDINGS  |    |   |    |     |     |     |
|------------|----|---|----|-----|-----|-----|
| Team       | W  | D | L  | Gf  | Ga  | Pts |
| Salt       | 11 | 1 | -  | 395 | 292 | 23  |
| Al Ahli    | 10 | 1 | -  | 392 | 296 | 21  |
| Arabi      | 10 | - | 2  | 426 | 330 | 20  |
| Hussein    | 6  | 1 | 5  | 350 | 344 | 13  |
| Umm Jozeh  | 4  | 1 | 8  | 311 | 386 | 9   |
| Amman      | 3  | 1 | 7  | 333 | 342 | 7   |
| Kufranjeh  | 2  | 2 | 9  | 356 | 426 | 5   |
| Y. Shouneh | 2  | - | 10 | 333 | 370 | 4   |

placed Amman.

Al Salt played a fast match with accurate passes and shots leaving Amman's defence in a state of confusion.

Al Salt ended the first half 15-7.

Amman tried to retaliate against Al Salt's strong defence but had to surrender and give the two-point match to Al Salt to top the standings for the time being.

Umm Jozeh 27 Y. Shouneh 24: Both teams were inaccurate in their passes. The match witnessed slow movement by the teams' defence and lack of concentration.

Umm Jozeh attacked with all their power and were able to end the first half 12-10.

In the second half Yarmouk Al Shouneh put up some resistance but it was not enough as they lost the match 27-24 (12-10).

## China considers making new Olympic bid

BEIJING (AFP) — China is to consider making a new bid next year to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

In October, International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch urged China to make a new bid to stage the world's biggest sporting event.

Samaranch, who attended China's National Games in Shanghai in October, said China has the ability to put up an excellent Olympiad.

The Beijing Youth Daily said China was still busy training for the Winter Olympic Games to be held in February next year in Japan and has no time at the moment to organize a bid for the 2008 Games.

The paper said the Chinese Olympic Committee will think about applying for the 2008 Games after the Winter Games.

China was beaten to the 2000 Games by Sydney and Chinese officials expressed their displeasure, with Sports Minister Wu Shaoyu blaming "non-sports factors" for Australia's victory.

## 2nd Islamic Games for Women conclude Friday

### Faezeh Rafsanjani stresses need for cooperation between Jordan and Iran

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

THE 2ND Islamic Games for Women conclude in Tehran, Iran, Friday after a week of competition grouping athletes from 19 countries.

The exclusively female Games are organised by Iran's Sports Solidarity Council for Women, headed by Faezeh Hashemi, daughter of former Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

On the sidelines of the Games, heads of delegations Wednesday met Ms. Hashemi, who is also a member of Iran's Shura Council and is vice-president of the Iranian Olympic Committee.

Ms. Hashemi stressed the importance of co-operation in the field of women's sports between Iran and Jordan and underlined her appreciation of the efforts of HRH Princess Alia and HRH Princess Rahma who head Jordan's equestrian and gymnastics federations.

In Isfahan, Jordanian athletes were due to have started their matches in

table tennis and badminton Wednesday and Thursday.

Jordan has so far secured two medals by Amal Al Mutari who clinched the gold medal in the 3,000 metres and added a silver in the 1,500 metres in the athletics event in the city of Rusd.

Mutari had won a bronze medal in the marathon at July's Pan-Arab Games.

The table tennis players hope to win their match against Pakistan after getting off to a bad start in the team event, losing 3-1 to Syria, 3-0 to Kazakhstan, and 3-0 to Indonesia.

Iran, Yemen, Lebanon, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan played in the other group.

Jordan's Hadeel Awwad played the singles and Alia Tuffaha and Lina Majdalawi teamed-up for the doubles.

Badminton matches also started Wednesday with Najwa Al Turk joining Lina Rashdan in the doubles and Karolin Shaker playing the singles.

The Kingdom's 14-member delegation missed the opening ceremony due to a flight delay. Jordan also missed

the meeting of the general assembly of the Islamic Solidarity Council which was reportedly held last month.

Nine Jordanian athletes are competing in athletics, table tennis and badminton in the Kingdom's first participation in the event — described as a "symbolic one" by Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) Secretary-General Ismat Kurdi.

The delegation includes four officials and a referee.

The Games are the first such event organised by Iran since February 1993 and were originally to be hosted by Pakistan, but returned to Tehran after Islamabad pleaded financial difficulties.

Events at the Games are athletics, chess, swimming, basketball, volleyball, tennis, shooting, handball, badminton, gymnastics, squash, equestrian and karate.

The Games are held less than two weeks after the Iranian capital hosted the 1st Southwest Asian Games which were open to men's teams only.

Jordan took part in eight sports and won ten medals at the event.

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### World Cup blow for Brazil

RIYADH (AFP) — Brazilian superstar Denilson will be out of football for at least a month, after dislocating his shoulder against Mexico in the Confederations Cup here on Tuesday. The injury to Denilson, the world's most expensive player, is a bitter blow for Brazilian coach Mario Zagallo and his World Cup build-up. The 21-year-old midfielder is expected to play a key role in Brazil's attempt to win the World Cup for a record fifth time but Zagallo was keen to see more of the Sao Paulo player in action before finalising his squad for France. "This injury on Denilson could not have come at a worse time for us. It does not help our preparation for 1998," said Zagallo, who as a left winger helped Brazil win the 1958 and 1962 World Cups and managed the 1970-winning side. Denilson became the most expensive player in the world almost two months ago when Spanish first division side Real Betis agreed to pay Sao Paulo \$34.8-million.

the World Cup finals. Buxton, who organised a tour to England last summer, said there were several players good enough for the English league.

### 4 swimmers suspended

LAUSANNE (AFP) — The international swimming federation (FINA) on Tuesday suspended four Russian swimmers who took drugs. Vladimir Pyshtenko, Natalia Mescheryakova and Olga Kochetkova were all suspended for two years from October 18, 1997 for taking anabolic steroids. FINA also suspended Alexi Kolesnikov for three months from January 1, 1998 for a drug offence.

### Broncos' Davis may miss regular season finale

DENVER (AFP) — Denver Broncos running back Terrell Davis, who had a chance to rush for 2,000 yards this season, may miss his team's season finale after suffering a separated right shoulder Monday. Davis entered the contest needing 278 yards in his final two games to reach 2,000 yards. He had a four-yard touchdown run that gave Denver a 7-0 lead in the first quarter but left the game with just 28 yards on 10 carries. The Broncos lost 34-17 to the San Francisco 49ers. "It happened on a screen pass. After the play I tried to run and it felt like my arm was coming off," Davis said. Denver can clinch the fourth seed in the AFC with a victory in its season-finale against San Diego next Sunday.

### English clubs seek Chinese players

BEIJING (AFP) — Several English Premiership clubs including Chelsea and Arsenal are chasing members of the Chinese national squad, state media reported Wednesday. Nine English clubs in all are interested in star striker Hao Haidong and his frontline partner Gao Feng along with national captain Fan Zhiyi and fellow defender Zhang Enhua. Ted Buxton was an assistant to former England manager Terry Venables was technical advisor to the Chinese national side in its failed bid to reach

## Manchester draw Monaco in Champions League quarters

GENEVA (AFP) — English champions Manchester United, who are aiming to become the Kings of Europe, have been drawn against Prince Rainier's side Monaco in the Champions League Cup quarter-finals.

The French league leaders, who recovered from a 3-0 defeat to Sporting Lisbon to finish top of their group with a 15-8 goals difference, have the top Champions League scorers in Thierry Henry who scored six goals in as many games.

Bayern Munich drew current champions Borussia Dortmund in an all-German clash while the third German qualifier, Bayer Leverkusen, who were the only runner-up to make the last eight, Real Madrid.

Juventus, who scrambled through when they beat Manchester United in the last match and Norway's Trondheim lost in Greece, were drawn against the talented Ukraine side Dynamo

Kiev. Monaco coach Jean Tigana, who made up the thrilling French midfield trio of the 80s with Michel Platini and Alain Giresse, also knew he had enough talent in reserve to allow Emmanuel Petit to join Arsenal and Patrick Blondeau to join Sheffield Wednesday.

Chelsea got the hardest draw in the European Cup Winners Cup quarter-finals when they were pitted against Real Betis, seventh

in the Spanish league, and whose talented attack includes Nigerian winger Finidi George.

UEFA Cup favourites Inter Milan were given a chance to avenge their defeat on penalties to Schalke 04 in last season's final when they were drawn against the German side.

Ajax Amsterdam, who are running away with the Dutch league, drew Spartak Moscow while Aston Villa face Atletico Madrid, who beat Leicester City in the

first round. Atletico, third in the Spanish league, have ex-Middlesbrough Brazilian star Juninho calling the shots in attack. Manchester secretary Ken

Merrett said he was looking forward to their first match with a French club since they beat St. Etienne in the Cup Winners Cup 20 years ago.

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## SCOREBOARD

### NBA

|              |     |             |    |
|--------------|-----|-------------|----|
| Cleveland    | 103 | Phoenix     | 90 |
| Utah         | 103 | Miami       | 95 |
| LA Lakers    | 109 | Minnesota   | 96 |
| New York     | 83  | Detroit     | 78 |
| Houston      | 118 | Vancouver   | 91 |
| San Antonio  | 99  | Denver      | 85 |
| Golden State | 103 | Dallas      | 92 |
| Seattle      | 109 | LA Clippers | 94 |
| Sacramento   | 94  | Portland    | 87 |

### English FA Cup

|                                  |             |   |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---|
| 2nd round replay                 |             |   |
| Boreham Wood 0                   | Cheltenham  | 2 |
| Chesterfield 0                   | Grimsby     | 2 |
| Watford 2                        | Torquay     | 1 |
| After extra time                 |             |   |
| Hereford 1                       | Colchester  | 1 |
| Hereford won 5-4 on penalties    |             |   |
| Notts County 1                   | Preston     | 2 |
| After extra time                 |             |   |
| Basingstoke 0                    | Northampton | 0 |
| Northampton won 4-3 on penalties |             |   |

### Scottish League Second Division

|       |   |                |   |
|-------|---|----------------|---|
| Clyde | 0 | Queen of South | 0 |
|-------|---|----------------|---|

### German Bundesliga

|                 |   |               |   |
|-----------------|---|---------------|---|
| B. Dortmund     | 3 | Hertha Berlin | 0 |
| German Cup      |   |               |   |
| Quarter-finals  |   |               |   |
| Trier           | 1 | Mannheim      | 0 |
| Uerdingen       | 0 | VfB Stuttgart | 4 |
| Carl Zeiss Jena | 1 | MSV Duisburg  | 2 |

### Confederation Cup

|              |   |           |   |
|--------------|---|-----------|---|
| Group A      |   |           |   |
| Brazil       | 3 | Mexico    | 2 |
| Saudi Arabia | 1 | Australia | 0 |

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## Iraq accuses U.S. of fabricating new crisis; Butler to submit report today

Combined agency dispatches

DEPUTY PRIME Minister Tariq Aziz accused the United States on Wednesday of trying to provoke a new crisis by insisting on U.N. arms inspections of Iraq's presidential palaces.

"This has been used as a pretext to dramatise the situation... to use that drama to prepare the ground for a military aggression," Mr. Aziz told a press conference here. "The question has been fabricated by the Americans."

He insisted that inspections of presidential palaces were "out of the mandate" of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) in charge of disarming Iraq, and that his country no longer had proscribed weapons.

"I think the world will condemn America if it commits another aggression against Iraq," said Mr. Aziz. "If they are threatening... we simply tell them we are not scared... Iraq will defend itself."

Iraq has insisted its presidential palaces are off-limits to UNSCOM, but it also eased curbs on access to other "sensitive" sites, said the Special Commission's chief Richard Butler on Monday at the end

of talks with Mr. Aziz.

Mr. Butler was to report back to the U.N. Security Council on Thursday on the outcome of his four-day visit to Iraq.

U.S. President Bill Clinton reacted by warning of further punitive actions against Iraq if it failed to give the U.N. arms inspectors full access to suspected weapons sites.

"If there is further obstruction of the United Nations mission we have to consider other options," Mr. Clinton said. "I wouldn't rule out anything."

Since a crisis over inspections erupted at the end of October, the United States has kept a military strike force in the Gulf, where two aircraft carriers are deployed along with some 300 warplanes.

The crisis was eased last month as Iraq allowed back expelled U.S. members of UNSCOM under an accord with Russia which pledged to work for a rapid lifting of economic sanctions.

An oil embargo in force since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait can not be lifted until UNSCOM has eliminated Baghdad's capacity to produce weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Aziz said that with the Russian accord, the crisis had been "resolved in a diplomatic

manner."

Iraqi newspapers reported on Wednesday that an Iraqi official has denounced President Clinton for saying that more action might be needed to force Baghdad to give full access to U.N. weapons inspectors.

"Three permanent members of the [U.N.] Security Council, almost all European countries except for its [U.S.] ally Britain, and all Arab states have rejected the logic of aggression and the show of troops and frigates by the American administration," said a statement by a spokesman for the ministry of information and culture carried by newspapers.

Mr. Clinton said at a news conference that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had not gained from his showdown over the role of U.N. inspectors, including his temporary expulsion of Americans in the team in November.

But the Iraqi statement said: "World public opinion has taken a different stand from American argument after seeing Iraq's legitimate demands to protect its sovereignty, security and the interest of its people."

"Once again he [Mr. Clinton] is clearly betraying

himself when he talked about the world's stand for his country's aggressive threat against Iraq," it added.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said on Wednesday the Security Council would have to decide how to react following Iraq's refusal to allow full weapons inspections.

"That is something for the Security Council members to decide," he told a news conference in Malaysia when asked what the U.N. could do after Baghdad's refusal to allow U.N. teams into top security "presidential sites."

President Hussein and his top aides met in Baghdad on Tuesday and issued a statement saying Iraq would cooperate with the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors overseeing the dismantling of Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction after the 1991 Gulf war.

But it said the United Nations must also consider Iraq's national security concerns.

Mr. Butler said on Monday after talks with Iraqi officials that Baghdad had told him it would never let his inspectors enter presidential sites.

## Turkey threatens to formally withdraw its EU application

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey Wednesday threatened to formally withdraw its application for full membership of the European Union in the event that the EU does not include Ankara in its list of candidate states by June.

"If the EU does not hold a new summit to change its decision on Turkey by June we will formally withdraw our application for full membership," Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz told Turkish reporters in Brussels during a stopover on his way to the United States.

"If Turkey is not placed among the 11 candidate countries, we will not change this decision of ours," Mr. Yilmaz said, cited by the Anadolu news agency. "They should learn Turkey is not a banana republic," he added.

Turkey applied to join the EU in 1987, but its bid has been rejected twice since then. EU leaders decided Saturday to exclude Ankara from negotiations on joining the 15-member Union as part of plans for EU enlargement. The negotiations are to begin in earnest early next year.

EU leaders instead offered to grant Turkey a seat at a standing pan-European conference in a bid to defuse its anger over being shut out of enlargement plans.

Most countries accepted for membership negotiations are in eastern Europe. The human rights situation in Turkey was given as a major EU concern.

Mr. Yilmaz had already said on Sunday that Turkey had cut political dialogue with the bloc

following its rejection and dismissed the offer to take part in the pan-European conference next year.

But at the time he fell short of announcing that Ankara would withdraw the membership application.

Mr. Yilmaz meanwhile dismissed European criticism of Turkey's curtailing of talks lasting out at German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, whose country is opposed to Ankara's membership bid, according to Turkish officials.

"Kinkel is talking nonsense," Mr. Yilmaz said.

Mr. Kinkel Monday described Ankara's cutting of dialogue as "a regrettable reaction, erroneous and unjustified," and added that "Turkey's EU membership depends on human rights, relations with Greece and the Kurdish question."

Germany has a sizeable Turkish immigrant minority and fears the free movement of Turks within the Union.

Mr. Kinkel had told reporters in Bonn that "religious issues play no role in Turkey's membership bid" but Mr. Yilmaz suggested that was not the case. "At the latest EU summit, those favouring the EU as a Christian union have won," said Mr. Yilmaz. Turkey is a predominantly Muslim but secular state.

Mr. Yilmaz also angrily accused those EU members more supportive of Turkey, apparently including France, Britain and Italy, of failing to do enough for Ankara at the Luxembourg summit.

"Anything against us was

passed, but those favouring us were faced with vetoes," he said. "We question the sincerity of all those who seemed to be friendly to us," he added.

Mr. Yilmaz said the European conference, to which Ankara was invited, "was something just cosmetic, artificial," adding as long as he remained Turkey's prime minister, his government would not take part in such meetings. Furious over its exclusion from EU enlargement plans, Turkey may retaliate by punishing European firms operating on its soil, an official said Tuesday.

"The government might consider economic measures," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity. He gave no details of what the measures might be.

He added: "This does not need a government decision. These kind of retaliatory measures are not announced in advance. They are just put into place."

Turkey is carrying out or preparing major economic and military projects, such as an armed forces modernisation programme that is to cost \$31 billion over 10 years.

Ankara and the European bloc signed an association agreement in 1963, calling for an eventual membership. However, Turkey has been accused of the EU of making false promises over its 34-year bid for EU membership, while Greece, Ankara's long-standing rival, has repeatedly opposed moves to include the Turks.

## U.N. Cyprus envoy talks with Denktash rescheduled

NICOSIA (R) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash on Wednesday rescheduled a meeting with the United Nations envoy to the divided island amid a row over Cyprus's EU membership negotiations.

The meeting was rescheduled, U.N. spokesman Waldemar Rokoszewski told Reuters. He did not say when U.N. Cyprus envoy Gustave Feissel would meet Mr. Denktash.

Mr. Denktash, leader of a breakaway state in the north, said on Monday the European Union decision to start membership negotiations with Cyprus meant the end of U.N.-sponsored intercommunal talks on the divided island.

"The intercommunal talks have died and, under these conditions, a federation is not on the agenda," a statement from his office quoted Mr. Denktash as saying. "Those who recognise our state can come and talk to us."

Diplomats in Nicosia, the divided capital, said it was not unusual for Mr. Denktash's office to reschedule meetings.

The U.N. has promoted the talks with the aim of building confidence between the estranged Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities towards creating a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation on the island.

The two communities on Cyprus have lived apart since 1974, when Turkish forces invaded the northern third of the island in response to a brief coup engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece.

Turkish Cyprus declared its statehood in 1983 but is recognised only by Ankara. The government in the south is internationally recognised as the only legitimate government of the divided Mediterranean island.

Turkish Cyprus argues that the Greek Cypriot-led government does not represent the entire island and cannot on its own negotiate EU membership.

The Cypriot government says the membership prospect would act as a catalyst to solving the division of Cyprus.



IN WINTER FASHION: A dog dressed to resist winter cold looks on at a tourist's market, Wednesday. Uncommonly cold weather stroke Russian capital this week (Reuters photo)

## Trial of alleged coup plotters opens in Qatar

DOHA (R) — A trial opened on Wednesday of seven Qatari charged with involvement in a failed 1996 plot to overthrow the emir of the Gulf Arab state.

The case followed another trial in which 110 men, including 10 foreigners, were charged with related offences. It began on Nov. 26 and adjourned until Feb. 11.

In the second trial, the seven handcuffed defendants were led into the packed Doha courtroom under tight security. They were charged with "selling military secrets to foreign countries with an intent to undermine the security and stability of the legitimate regime in Qatar."

The case documents did not mention a specific country. But Qatar has in the past accused Egypt of being behind the coup attempt and Bahrain of sheltering the alleged plotters.

A three-judge panel adjourned the case to Dec. 24 at the request of defendants' lawyers to give them time to study the charges and prepare their defence.

The names of the accused, read out by a judge at the start of the open hearing, were four brothers: Mohammed Majid Aman, Hassan Majid Aman, Aman Majid Aman and Omar Majid Aman, as well as Mohammed Ahmed Rashid Muhammad, Hamad Faraj Azran Marri and Khumir Muflih Faraj Najrani.

Of the 110 people previously charged in connection with the attempted coup, 40 are at large and will be tried in absentia. They include at least two prominent members of Qatar's ruling family, a Saudi, a Bahraini, a Tanzanian, a Sri Lankan and two Egyptians.

The 110 were charged with carrying weapons with the intent of undermining the

state, contacting foreign powers, revealing state secrets, plotting to overthrow a legitimate government and attacking the country.

Qatari authorities rounded up about 100 people loyal to the former emir, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani, in February 1996 after the failed attempt to overthrow the current emir, his son Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani.

The coup attempt came several months after Sheikh Hamad ousted his father in a June 1995 palace coup.

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Ben Jaur Al Thani revived accusations against Egypt at a news conference during a regional economic meeting in Doha on Nov. 17, saying Egypt had been the "maestro" of the coup.

Cairo dismissed the allegations as baseless.

## Retired Israeli spy master pleads innocent to fabricating information

TEL AVIV (AP) — A retired Mossad agent pleaded innocent Wednesday to fabricating information that reportedly pushed Israel and Syria to the brink of war last year.

The trial of former agent Yehuda Gil began behind closed doors in the Tel Aviv district court.

Gil, 63, who retired from the Mossad spy agency in 1989 after 19 years of service, was arrested a month ago and charged with fraud, embezzlement and passing on information with intent to damage state security.

Gil, who did some work for the Mossad after his retirement, reportedly told his superiors that Syrian President Hafez Assad was planning a lightning military strike to seize part of the Golan Heights captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war.

The information provoked responses that could have led Israel to the brink of war with Syria. Court papers released this month said the information Gil provided had "a significant influence on state security" and could have led to a loss of lives.

## Israeli army replaces officers' phones to foil Hezbollah eavesdropping

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israeli army will replace the cellular telephones used by officers in its northern command after discovering that Lebanese guerrillas were intercepting calls made on their outdated models, the Maariv newspaper reported Wednesday. General Amirani Levine, head of the northern command, led the way by turning in his analogical cell phone for a new digital model which specialists say is more difficult to intercept, the newspaper said. The switch-over was ordered after the army realised that Hezbollah was eavesdropping on calls made by officers on their cellular telephones in hopes of gathering information on troop movements, Maariv said. The guerrillas were able to intercept the phone calls using scanners which are readily available on the commercial market.

Gil pleaded innocent Wednesday, said his attorney, Yigal Shapira. Israel Rabin initially reported that Mr. Shapira pleaded guilty to some lesser charges. However, Mr. Shapira said his client simply acknowledged in court that some of the facts in the indictment, such as when he started working for the Mossad, were correct.

Mr. Shapira said his client was doing well. "He is very involved in the court proceedings. He writes notes all the time. He makes comments," Mr. Shapira told reporters.

The Yediot Achronot daily has reported that Gil cultivated a mole — a high-ranking official in the Syrian government — who in 1975 provided Israel with vital information. But at some point — it is not clear when — Gil allegedly began making up information instead and keeping the payments intended for the mole.

Gil has been quoted as telling Yediot that he kept passing on information because he felt the need to continue to prove himself after his retirement.



Love Story's Oliver Barrett based on Al Gore?

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Was the preppy and sexy lead character in the 1970 tear-jerker "Love Story" based on U.S. Vice President Al Gore? Washington has been abuzz about a report that Gore was indeed the basis of the character in the film played by Ryan O'Neil. But the author of the novel "Love Story," Erich Segal, knocked down most of the tale. Segal lived in the same Harvard University dormitory as Gore, together with actor Tommy Lee Jones. The family background of character Oliver Barrett IV was indeed based on Gore's family, Segal said. But Barrett himself was actually modelled on Jones, he said.

## Quinn marries former secretary

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Unbowed by age, 82-year-old actor Anthony Quinn married his former secretary Kathy Bevin, 35, People Magazine reported. The ceremony took place in Naples, Florida, and was attended by the couple's two children, Antonio, 4, and year-old Ryan. Quinn's ex-wife Yolanda, recently divorced from Quinn after a 31-year marriage, said the actor was making a fool of himself by marrying anew, the magazine reported.

## Lasers to light up great wall at millennium

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong plans to light up the Great Wall of China with lasers beamed from satellites to mark the turn of the century at midnight on Dec. 31, 1999, a newspaper said. The London-based Millennium Foundation, which is organising global millenary celebrations, has asked the Hong Kong Cancer Fund charity to oversee Chinese and Hong Kong festivities, the South China Morning Post said. The Millennium Foundation is coordinating events to mark the stroke of midnight in a live global television broadcast starting in Fiji and ending in the Cook Islands 25 hours later.

## Belgian deputy rails at money down the drain in EU Parliament

BRUSSELS (AFP) — An EU Belgian deputy has slammed the cost of new bathrooms being installed in offices of members of the European Parliament. Jack Vandemulderbroucke said that putting in 128 bathrooms into the building here in Brussels was costing \$1.84 million, some five or six times their real cost. The row arises because the bathrooms are unlikely to be used since regulations for the building forbid the deputies to spend the night in the offices when working late or visiting from abroad. Europe Vandemulderbroucke said the committee responsible for ordering the bathrooms were "behaving like the managers of Ali Baba's cave."

## Writer says U.K. needs more bodies in libraries

LONDON (AP) — Crime writer Ruth Rendell, who has chilled millions with her bloody tales of dead bodies, told parliament that Britain needed more bodies in libraries — to do more reading. Books must not be excluded by computer technology and viewed as "curiosities from a former age," she said. "To be literate is to turn the soul's eye towards the light." More living bodies must get to the library "if we are to achieve a society of contented, fulfilled people," she said. "I have written many books with bodies in libraries or less salubrious places," she joked.

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